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CLAREMONT

REVIEW OF BOOKS

A Journal of Political Thought and Statesmanship

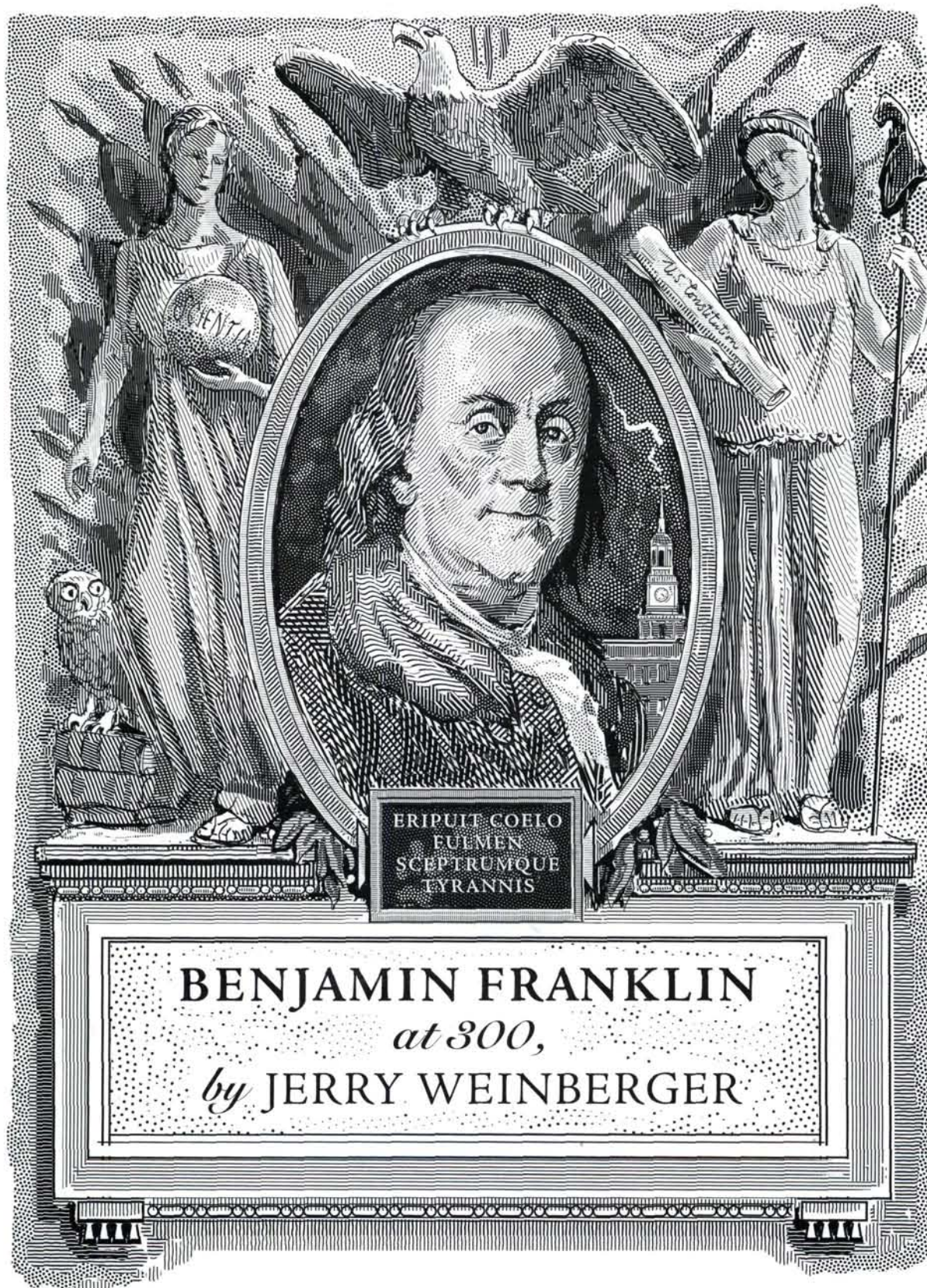
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FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

PRACTICAL ATHEISTS

by Charles R. Kesler

SCROOGE REJECTED "MERRY CHRISTMAS" AS HUMBUG—NON-sense, of the sort that encouraged the weak-minded to waste time on religion and revelry. We could teach Scrooge a thing or two about despoising holidays.

Only in latter-day America could a benevolent "Merry Christmas" be twisted into a politically incorrect affront to polite norms, a sinister and unconstitutional threat to establish religion, or both.

As a question of etiquette, the issue invites thought. To wish someone the joy of the holiday is not automatically to presume that he shares it. For example, it's not impolite to say "Happy St. Patrick's Day" to someone who isn't Irish. By the same token, one can wish a Frenchman "Happy Bastille Day" without being a Frenchman, or even approving of the French Revolution. The important thing is that, in saying it, you wish him well; imagining yourself in his shoes is a gracious part of such friendliness.

But today's controversies have little to do with such delicate questions. They turn not on individual character and circumstances, nor on the mutual respect and civility possible between great religions, but on identity rights and a growing hostility to religion as such.

This season's dustup over "Happy Holidays" is thus a mild case of a more serious disorder. The cutting edge of aggressive secularism reveals itself in efforts to banish Biblical religion altogether from public life: to remove "under God" from the Pledge of Allegiance, to abrade the Ten Commandments from public buildings, to discourage schoolchildren from filling their moments of silence with a joyful noise unto the Lord. In effect, the secularists demand that the tone of public life must be made to conform to atheistic standards. Everyone must be taught to behave as "practical atheists," in John Paul II's wonderful phrase. Even believers—especially believers—must learn to speak and act, outside the sanctuary of their churches and synagogues, as though God doesn't exist. Anything else would amount to persecution of non-believers.

In all these efforts, the Supreme Court by its egregious misinterpretations of the First Amendment's Establishment Clause has either fervently promoted religion's expulsion from the public square, or at best preserved its place temporarily by minimizing religion's seriousness. The Court's present course was set in 1947, when it ruled, for the first time, that government may not "support any religious activities or

institutions, whatever they may be called, or whatever form they may adopt to teach or practice religion." Before that, an "establishment of religion" had been understood narrowly, as the legislative designation of an official state church (or churches), with tax money dedicated to the support of its ministers, property, or both. The older understanding allowed for many kinds of government support of religion short of establishing it, and for a public square enriched by religion's free exercise.

There were disagreements over where to draw the lines. But then, unlike now, the disputes were over how, and to what extent, to accommodate religion and public life—not over whether to do so. From the beginning, the president and Congress called for national days of prayer and thanksgiving. The House issued its first such call on the same day that it passed the First Amendment. Congress authorized chaplains for itself (God knows they needed them) and for the armed forces. When Thomas Jefferson was president, the largest church services in the United States took place in the Capitol building, and he attended regularly.

Why did the founders by and large support religion's prominent but mostly informal public role? In the first place, the free exercise of religion (or the rights of conscience) was a vital part of man's natural rights. With its roots in the Bible, religion had also an integral connection with morality. Self-government presumed a self-controlled or moral people, and religion helped to shape those mores. Moreover, religion and religious freedom helped to shape politics by supporting limited government. There was something divine in man, and an authority in heaven superior to human will, which put permanent limits on government's power.

Finally, religion dignified civil society by making it the home of man's highest purpose, to know and worship God. Yet civil society was also the site of man's lower but urgent purpose, economic exchange and moneymaking. The two were connected, so G. K. Chesterton observed, by such merry occasions as holy days. "Rationally," he wrote, "there appears no reason why we should not sing and give each other presents in honour of anything—the birth of Michael Angelo or the opening of Euston Station. But it does not work. As a fact, men only become greedily and gloriously material about something spiritualistic." In other words, if you want to keep complaining about the commercialization of Christmas, don't turn it into a mere happy holiday.

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C O R R E S P O N D E N C E

NATURAL RIGHTS

Hadley Arkes completely misunderstands and mischaracterizes my position in my book *Rights From Wrongs* ("The Rights and Wrongs of Alan Dershowitz," Fall 2005). I do not reject reason, but I insist that reason must be buttressed by experience, especially experience with wrongs. He focuses on the insistence in our Bill of Rights that all men are created equal, but he neglects to mention that it was experience that led us to conclude that all women should be deemed equal to men and that all blacks should be equal to whites and that homosexuals should be deemed equal to heterosexuals. Without the horrible experiences of racism and sexism—and our overdue acknowledgment that these are indeed evils—the drafters of our Bill of Rights could not even imagine the equality of women, blacks, and gays. Their reason alone did not permit men as brilliant as Jefferson, Adams, and Franklin to broaden the concept of equality beyond white, male heterosexuals. I urge interested readers to actually delve into my arguments as I wrote them and see how I answer every one of the charges leveled by Arkes. If they do, they will learn that although I have long opposed *Roe v. Wade* and its constitutionalization of a woman's right to choose abortion, I present a nuanced argument regarding this divisive issue based on experience. The best Arkes can come up with is an absolutist suggestion that all fetuses are "men" who must be deemed equal within the meaning of the Declaration (and that presumably pregnant women are not).

I also urge your readers to ignore the absurd *ad hominem*s Professor Arkes directs at me. His review is as much about my life as it is about my book. The most despicable paragraph in his review refers to allegations of plagiarism made against two of my colleagues, and the "mischievous hypothetical" that he offers: "Could it be that parts of Dershowitz's book are in conflict with one another because they were written by different hands?" Arkes doesn't even have the guts to make the accusation directly, because he knows that I write all of my manuscripts entirely by hand, since I do not know how to type or use a computer. I can assure him that every single word of my book was written by me. I guess Arkes's conception of natural law does not include any prohibition against leveling baseless accusa-

tions or bearing false witness. If he wants to get out of the gutter and debate the merits of my secular theory of rights—a theory for those who do not believe in divine revelation or "truths outside ourselves"—I would be happy to engage him.

Alan M. Dershowitz
Harvard Law School
Cambridge, MA

Hadley Arkes replies:

Professor Dershowitz, it appears, is vexed, and apparently nothing of my placating words softened the sting of the review for him. I join Dershowitz in inviting the reader to compare both his book and his letter to my review: to gauge just which one is more substantive, which one more temperate and civil. Indeed, instead of dealing with the substantive criticisms, Dershowitz imputes arguments that were never made, and tries to change the subject by launching other attacks. I'm afraid that Professor Dershowitz is the author of his own problems, for most of the review consisted of citing Dershowitz against himself. Dershowitz himself warned against those who would seek the ground of moral judgments, or natural law, in "external sources such as God, nature, reason, or some notion of objective reality." And he professes himself to be a "moral relativist" and a "skeptic" in matters moral. To put it all together, he denies there are objective moral truths that reason can disclose. Of what then are we arguing? But in that vein, Dershowitz did not seem to notice that, in my review, I did fill in the way human beings have reasoned about these matters of moral consequence, in the form of principled reasoning without appeals to faith and revelation. That is the style of natural law reasoning: using the reason that is natural and accessible to human beings. The piece is worth reading again.

Dershowitz seems to contend now that something called "experience" may be the source of understanding quite apart from whether that understanding has any epistemic claim to be regarded as true. Experience may indeed alert us to implications of our principles that have gone unnoticed. But if our judgments find no ground in reason, then experience will have nothing to awaken or disclose. The axiom "all men are created equal" was understood,

even in the founding generation, to encompass black people, and yes, it was understood in that way by Jefferson and other founders from the South as well as the North. And when the case was made for the suffrage of women, the reasons contained in that "proposition," as Lincoln called it, were sufficient in themselves to put the burden of proof on anyone who would deny, to women, the right to consent to the terms on which they were governed. It is curious, to say the least, that Dershowitz is content to back into the understanding of Chief Justice Taney and the enemies of Lincoln by associating himself with the heresy that the Declaration of Independence did not include "all men." That fallacy has been revived by the Left in our own day, and I'm surprised that Dershowitz has fallen for it.

But then again Dershowitz brings us the news that "all men are created equal" is to be found in the Bill of Rights (a slip he corrected later without catching the slip itself). We may be dealing, though, with a trick-of-the-eye: The same sense of things that finds "all men are created equal" in the Bill of Rights may hold, with the same surety, that the Constitution itself contains a right to abortion. I don't recall saying that fetuses were "men," or that they were outfielders or lawyers. The point was simply that we needed a principled ground for denying that the offspring of human beings can be anything other than human at any stage. And if it cannot be regarded as less than human, then the reasons one would need to justify the taking of this life must be as serious as the reasons we would require in taking the life of any other human. Dershowitz's so-called "nuanced" views provide no ground for coping either with the evidence from embryology or the demands of principled reasoning in supplying a justification for the taking of this innocent life. After all, as a professed skeptic, he invokes no claim to settle his judgment on anything other than the opinion that prevails in the local "culture," and he disclaims any objective truths as the ground of any conclusion he may announce. His views are so nuanced that they fade away in sublime subtlety.

I remarked in my review that Alan Dershowitz has written many sensible things, and even if I found myself deeply critical of this recent book, I would regard him as a part of the ongoing conversation. Invective does not repair the defects in the book or help in resuming the conversation. But then again, it does make the juices flow.

THE PROBLEM WITH EUROPE

As some of your readers may remember, Jeremy Rabkin and I have not always been in agreement. I was thus all the more pleased to read his essay on the prospects for the European Union after the rejection by French and Dutch voters of the European Constitutional Treaty ("Continental Drift," Fall 2005).

Professor Rabkin very rightly says that "to call this a constitution is to misuse the word." He accurately describes how European peoples are more and more governed neither by their national governments nor by a truly European government but rather by the "collective authority" of "national executive officials." There is no European government because "the E. U. has no police, field agents, or inspectors, and no local courts of its own." And Rabkin points toward the central weakness of the whole project, i.e., "severing rights protections from national authority."

Now the question arises: how could Europeans go on building this compendium of political and constitutional heresies? To invoke a "bureaucratic" propensity on their part is not sufficient. What was decisive, it seems to me, is the conjunction of impersonal bureaucratic agency with an idea vested with superior legitimacy, the idea of "democracy"—democracy understood as the extension, through contiguity and example, of humanitarian "fellow-feeling." To put it in a nutshell: we are busy substituting "democratic governance" for representative government—the generalization of "democratic criteria" for national or, in any case, political deliberation. At some point the prestige of the idea was fated to crash against the reality of peoples hankering after genuinely representative government. The sudden explosion of numbers (the E.U. now encompasses 25 members and more are slated to come on board soon) was perhaps what did the Treaty in: no one in his or her right mind would be willing to live in a smorgasbord of

nations whose "common" policy is bound to be the haphazard result of processes nobody understands and which in truth "represent" nobody. Voters rightly felt that now was the time to stop the process of dispossession. Whether the process has really stopped remains to be seen. My hunch is that the European ruling class intends to take us for a ride again, which will have the very bad effect of pushing each nation toward nationalistic self-defense, however ill-conceived. Most observers have failed to notice how the process has begun to nurture ill will between European nations instead of goodwill, which had been the general mood until recently. Where do we go from here? The only way out is to return to the founding spirit, and to conceive Europe not as a supranational entity but again as a common endeavor of European nations. This means—and here I probably part company with Professor Rabkin—that the founding members, France and Germany, will still have a special role to play.

Rabkin states that "the most fundamental reason that the E.U. is now in crisis is that the economies of the core states have performed quite poorly for more than a decade. Germany and France have stagnated...." Although Germany is still an impressive industrial powerhouse, there is no disputing the mediocre economic performance of the founding nations. The question is: what is the cause and what is the effect? Well, cause and effect interact and exchange places. But I am inclined to think that the murkiness of the political prospects brings about a loss of confidence in one's own powers, which in turn acts as a brake on economic initiative.

As Rabkin rightly notes, "A vague yearning for 'community' constrains governments from unleashing individual economic initiative...." Now, if individual economic initiative is certainly not something for which France is renowned, and if I occasionally add my own weak voice to those in my country who plead for "unleashing" it, I think Americans—I refrain from writing "Anglo-Saxons"—overestimate the difference it would make. More precisely, the "Anglo-Saxon" way of doing things, the successes of which I do not dream of denying, cannot simply be transferred to continental Europe. As much as I admire the dynamism and prosperity of the United States, I wonder whether the superiority of the American model is such a clear-cut case that the only responsible thing for us to do is simply to imitate it. Which brings me to Gerard Alexander's interesting and revealing article ("The Other American Exceptionalism," Fall 2005).

Professor Alexander, I am afraid, falls into the trap of proving too much. Summarizing "a recent study by two Swedish economists," he writes, "The study found that 40% of all Swedish households would classify as low-income by American standards." Well, when the results of a "study" are clearly absurd, you had better unstudy it quickly. Again, there is no denying the greater wealth and, more interestingly, the greater vitality of the United States. But when economic criteria are elaborated in an American context, those who use them are bound to exaggerate the economic defects of European countries. As for France, I would settle for some loosening of the straitjacket in order to bring more young people into the work force and to permit older people to work longer.

To speak in more general terms, I am struck by how much Alexander is eager to have European conservatives resemble American ones and disappointed that they do not. What good purpose would be served by greater uniformity in the Western world? It is the last thing that conservatives should desire. "Making the world safe for conservative principles" does not mean Europeans mimicking American conservatives. As I am just about to publish a small book in France which takes on many European pieties, I would be the last to deny that European countries will come to nothing if they do not shed some of their soft-headedness. But it would be good if hard-headed Americans recognize the relevant facts and cease making them up. So let me report that, contrary to the stale canard which Gerard Alexander is not above repeating, Jerry Lewis does not "remain"—because he never was in the first place—"a matinee favorite on the other side of the Atlantic."

More seriously, in coming years the American polity as well as the European endeavor will face numerous trials. Both have recently suffered from very different but equally acute cases of "democratic" hubris. They will need to trim their sails intelligently. When utopias flounder, it is time for true conservatives to make the appropriate adjustments. I know that Professor Rabkin disagrees on this point, but I still think that the best hope for the West lies in conservatives on both sides of the pond aiming at the same ends with their necessarily different means. And we will prevail if only Americans have less contempt for Europeans and Europeans less contempt for political reality.

Pierre Manent

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In their thoughtful essays on Europe and America, Gerard Alexander and Jeremy Rabkin may be too optimistic about the prospects for political improvements in Europe. At any rate, they are too imprecise about what such improvements would require.

They accurately notice the current economic weakness of many European countries compared to the United States. Although they also touch on some of the underlying and deeper moral and political differences between America and Europe, they omit some central moral and political facts, and thereby risk underestimating what Europeans need to do in order to solve their problems.

Professor Alexander shows how the search for "the median voter" often drives politicians in America and Europe to exaggerate the differences between American and European political beliefs and preferences, and he concludes that American conservatives can even count on Democrats to help promote America's more conservative preferences to receptive European audiences. But what should Americans say to Europeans? He recommends ways in which we might try to erode European fears of economic liberalization. But would that be an adequate way of encouraging Europeans to base politics on "human nature and its limitations"?

Professor Rabkin may be right that "at bottom" a good political community is "a mutual defense agreement," but at its top a good liberal democracy will cultivate the ethics of human equality. That is what has made America a success story—for example, in its treatment of immigrants, in contrast to European experience. Men who do not regard each other as equals do not trust each other. Rabkin accurately notices European states' continuing distrust of each other, which makes fanciful (or worse) the idea of their political union. Europeans' mutual distrust and resulting political incompetence occurs in their domestic politics as well as in their interstate relations. Europeans lack the American advantage of being dedicated to the proposition that "all men are created equal"; even when European regimes entertain that proposition, they often distort it.

It is unlikely that a return to more impressive economic performance would solve European political crises, in the absence of more impressive moral and political thinking by European citizens and leaders.

John Zvesper
Le Vigan, Gard
France

Jeremy Rabkin replies:

I am grateful to Pierre Manent for his gracious letter. I have no quarrel with his cautions

regarding French economic policy nor with his hopes for a strategic partnership, within Europe, between France and Germany. We must disagree, however, on the significance of the Anglo-American effort to nurture democracy in Iraq. I do not think this effort reflects "hubris" and I remain disappointed that France and Germany still refuse to provide any significant assistance to the new government in Iraq. Just as we have continuing disagreements on this matter, I think it is inevitable that American policy will often be at odds with European priorities. So I must also express respectful dissent from Professor Manent's closing appeal for solidarity among the nations of "the West." I hope it will be possible to cooperate with European nations in future efforts. But I don't think U.S. relations with European nations should take priority over our relations with India, Japan, or our traditional partners in the western hemisphere.

In spite of these reservations, I find myself more in sympathy with Pierre Manent here than with John Zvesper. I do not understand what Zvesper means by the term "ethics of human equality," but I am sure that, whatever it is, that ethic is not the highest or best thing in America. I don't think it is credible to claim that Americans have always embraced immigrants as their equals—any more than blacks and whites, northerners and southerners, Protestants and Catholics have always regarded each other as equals.

We have learned to work together, because we all see the value in common institutions to protect each citizen's person, liberty, and property. There are many things higher than such basic guarantees, but we can disagree about what they are, so long as we agree about these preconditions of our common life. Our sense of obligation to our common institutions implies, however, that we owe more to our fellow citizens than to outsiders, even though the latter are human beings, too.

I don't see much point in hectoring Europeans about equality. I think Manent is right when he warns that Europeans are already so infatuated with a distorted ideal of "democracy," which is, at some level, an "ethics of human equality," that they no longer think seriously enough about what is required to sustain reliable or enduring protection of citizens' rights.

Gerard Alexander replies:

Professor Manent is dismissive of recent observations that per capita income has grown notably higher in the United States than in many West European countries. We can all question the terms of any one study. And no one is disputing that many Europeans enjoy a high quality of life. Many Europeans wouldn't

trade the U.S. economic model for their own. But the trend toward relatively higher U.S. incomes is not especially ambiguous. This is not surprising given that the U.S. enjoys high rates of productivity growth, longer periods of strong GDP growth, and much higher rates of both labor force participation and employment than the main continental European economies.

Manent also fears that I'm calling for a homogenization of U.S. and European conservatism, on the American model. This couldn't be further from the truth. Conservatism is the least "harmonized" political sector in the world—to the point where even self-declared conservatives don't mean the same thing by their label—and that's neither going to change nor is it desirable to change.

For that reason, it's only of limited use to refer to "European" conservatives as both Manent and I casually do. All I'm suggesting is that various European conservative sectors could do with some revitalization, and American conservatives might help with that process. The first part of that can't be very controversial. And the second can't be particularly messianic, given how often Europeans of the center-right ask their American counterparts for moral support and advice. Manent himself provides a good starting point when he describes "conservatives on both sides of the pond aiming at the same ends with their necessarily different means."

John Zvesper is skeptical that economic liberalization and growth are any kind of substitute for deep regeneration of political thinking. I agree. Then again, we're not sure why this thinking varies across societies and time, and it's possible that more experience in competitive marketplaces may itself be a transmission belt for new ideas. This, after all, was part of the strategy behind U.S. welfare reform in the 1990s: changing the form of people's engagement with the world of work might shift their thinking about a lot of things. These are blunt instruments, but I don't see many others lying within reach.

THE POPE AND ERIC VOEGELIN

In my essay on "The Mind of Pope Benedict XVI" (Fall 2005), I noted the close affinity between the views of Eric Voegelin and Cardinal Ratzinger, and concluded that both thinkers reached similar viewpoints from different starting points. This view needs to be corrected in the light of a (rather illegible) copy of what seems to be an authentic letter (in English translation) by Cardinal Ratzinger, dated July 11, 1981, which a colleague gave to me after reading the article. It appears that Voegelin had sent a signed copy of one of his books to Cardinal Ratzinger, who at the time was Archbishop of Munich, together with an invitation to at-



tend the philosopher's birthday party. In his reply, the cardinal regrets not being able to accept the invitation, as it would have afforded him an opportunity to get to know Voegelin personally. Voegelin's book, according to Ratzinger, was a "philosophical meditation" intended to introduce its readers to a refined understanding of the imperfect, as opposed to the magic of utopianism. This topic is indeed the *cantus firmus*, so to say, of much of Ratzinger's theology of political life. Even more interesting is the comment by Ratzinger: "Since your little book *Science, Politics, and Gnosticism* came into my hands in 1959, your thinking has fascinated and enriched me, even though I was unable to follow it up as thoroughly as I would have wished."

It is thus clear that Voegelin's influence on Cardinal Ratzinger was greater than I had initially thought.

Rev. Dr. D. Vincent Twomey, SVD
Pontifical University, St. Patrick's College
Maynooth, County Kildare
Ireland

RELOCATING CITIZENS

Charles Lofgren's review of Michelle Malkin's *In Defense of Internment* is a milestone in the scholarly discussion of the ethnic Japanese relocation of World War II ("Hardships of War," Summer 2005), just as Malkin herself intended to shatter the politically correct understanding of that episode. One of the premier historians of his generation, Lofgren praises the book: "a largely fair assessment of the relocation program in operation," but he does criticize provocative "off-putting and irrelevant" comments. His criticism that Malkin is "needlessly inaccurate" deserves a response (I should disclose that I am acknowledged in the book).

As any historian should, Lofgren subjects Malkin's chronology to a severe test. He allows that "MAGIC and MAGIC-derived reports undeniably testify to espionage activity," in the form of Japanese consulate reports of domestic Japanese spy rings. But Malkin, he says, "does not carefully sort out what was known at the time from what was not." The author should have conducted "a more careful investigation into the true role of intelligence reports in the decision to relocate the Issei and Nisei." Lofgren raises reasonable questions about the conclusions she draws about the interpretation of MAGIC reports. But he places too much weight on his question whether "they disclose[d] 'Japanese-controlled espionage cells,' either to DeWitt or to his superiors in Washington who made the actual [relocation] decision...." To the contrary,

the political significance of her overall argument is not dependent on who read the MAGIC intercepts, or when they were read.

The power and the truth of Malkin's book lie in putting front and center the remarkable story of what even good standard histories of World War II often omit: the Japanese-American couple who aided a pilot who landed his damaged Zero on tiny Niihau island following the Pearl Harbor attack. They sought to take over the island, far to the west in the Hawaiian archipelago. A native Hawaiian couple killed the pilot, however, and the Japanese-American husband committed suicide.

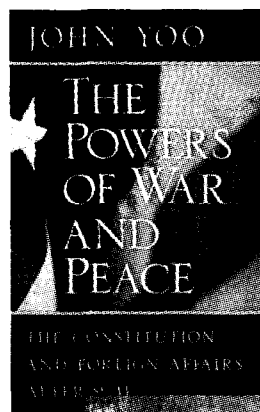
If a presumptively loyal, apolitical Japanese-American couple would come to the aid of an invader, what might we expect from other Japanese on the mainland? Racism doubtless exaggerated wartime passions, and "political considerations"—as Lofgren notes—played their role in the drastic relocation policy. Yet a reasonable

argument could be made, taking seriously imperial Japan's own nationalistic appeals (which Lofgren recognizes), that ethnic Japanese on the West Coast, who suffered discriminatory treatment, might not all be loyal, when subject to the test the young couple on Niihau took and failed. What written exam, what interview, could have possibly screened the loyal from the disloyal? Should this have been left to community self-policing? These were the questions facing those responsible for American national security at the beginning of the war. The relocation—which my parents endured—might well have ended sooner and might have been carried out differently, but it remains defensible as a reasonable post-Pearl Harbor response, as Malkin's book makes clear for those who are willing to test their own loyalties against prevailing orthodoxies.

Ken Masugi
Claremont, CA

On the Issues

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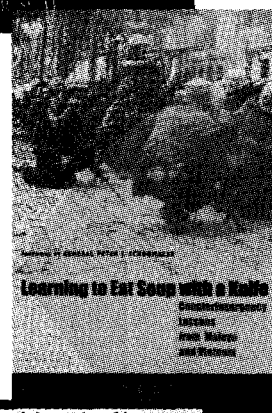
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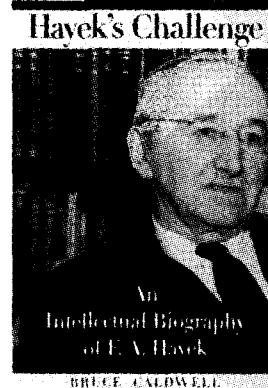
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As one of the “internees” discussed in Professor Lofgren’s review, I’d like to comment. My entire family of four was interned for two years in a camp in the Arizona Desert near Yuma. We were all American citizens by birth (my mother, sister, and I were born in California, and my father was born in Hawaii). About two-thirds of the people interned were American citizens. Of the nine or ten convictions for espionage on behalf of Japan during World War II, all were caucasians. Michelle Malkin makes much of one Japanese-American couple who did help a downed Japanese pilot on a Hawaiian Island, but doesn’t address why there was no mass internment of Japanese-Americans who lived and worked in Hawaii.

The hysteria of the times is clearly indicated by a quote from Earl Warren, then-Attorney General of California, later the state’s governor and Chief Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court: “The fact that there has been no sabotage or espionage on the part of the Japanese-Americans is proof that there is a conspiracy and they are just waiting for the right moment to strike.” In today’s climate, that quotation would surely disqualify him from serving on the Court (although ironically it would be liberal Democrats who would reject him). In any case, it was clearly a no-win situation for anyone of Japanese ancestry living on the West Coast in early 1942. The absence of evidence of no disloyalty or criminal activity was not a defense against punishment.

In the face of such rhetoric, how could anyone risk moving to a strange part of the country with no friends, family, or connections as an alternative to accepting incarceration? To understand the hardship of my two years living in an Army barrack along with four other families, consider the Arizona Desert with no insulation and no air conditioning. Heating was available if you gathered wood or made charcoal. Dining was in large mess halls and there was no indoor plumbing—mass outhouses with rows of holes in a long bench being the only facilities.

I think that Michelle Malkin’s book has done a disservice to the notion of profiling Muslim men from the Middle East. I agree that such profiling is reasonable if conducted with courtesy and professionalism, but if Malkin needs to defend the mass internment of a subset of American citizens to make a case for profiling Muslim non-citizens, her case is lost.

Edwin S. Fujinaka
Tucson, AZ

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Charles A. Lofgren replies:

My friend Ken Masugi leaves the impression that I condemned *In Defense of Internment* as “needlessly inaccurate.” In fact, my comment focused narrowly on a claim that Michelle Malkin advances while discussing the relocation program *after* the removal decision. With respect to this aspect of the program, I wrote that Malkin provides “a largely fair assessment,” but one with annoying flaws. I directed the quoted charge itself specifically to her assertion that in *Korematsu v. United States* (1944), the Supreme Court “ruled that no one of Japanese ancestry was compelled ‘either in fact or by law’ to enter a relocation center.” The Court did not so rule.

As for Masugi’s broader point, it is Malkin herself who sets out to judge the removal decision and subsequent relocation program on the basis of “*what was known and not known at the time*” (her emphasis). She herself also gives every indication of seeing the intelligence picture as central and essential to her argument that the removal decision was justifiable. Intelligence operations and information derived from them figure significantly in six of her chapters, totaling 66 pages, and she includes a hundred pages of appendices reproducing MAGIC and other intelligence documents. She describes the information as key to the conclusion of Assistant Secretary of War John McCloy and others that ethnic Japanese (both American citizens and resident aliens) posed a subversive threat along the West Coast. To judge her treatment of the removal decision on the basis of how well she demonstrates who knew what, and when, may impose a “severe test,” but the test flows from taking her on her own terms.

Malkin devotes one short chapter of less than six pages to the incident on Niihau Island. Further on, she states that a report on it in late January 1942 “presumably further exacerbat[ed] concerns” within the War Department about the danger posed by the ethnic Japanese on the mainland. Nowhere does she demonstrate the connection between the several reports on the incident, which itself occurred in early December 1941, and the removal decision of mid-February 1942. Who read the reports? What dangers along the West Coast did the readers actually infer from them? Until someone displays the evidence, I am disinclined to discover in the incident a timeless “political significance.” (Perhaps one could find significance in the documented fact that the Army lieutenant sent immediately by military authorities to investigate the events on Niihau was a Nisei.)

If anything, one might imagine that the incident would have raised security concerns about Hawaii’s large population of Japanese ancestry, but, as Edwin Fujinaka notes, no mass reloca-

tion occurred there. At one time or another during 1942, however, President Roosevelt and the civilian and service leaders in the War and Navy Departments did support various proposals to remove anywhere from 10,000 to 100,000 of the Territory’s Issei and Nisei, either to one of the outlying islands or to the mainland. In the end, the Army commander in Hawaii successfully opposed mass removal, because a lack of shipping capacity and the crucial importance of ethnic Japanese within the local economy rendered it impractical.

COLLEGE COSTS

John Silber’s review of my book, *Going Broke by Degree*, was far milder criticism of my work than offered by others in the higher education establishment, and for that I guess I am grateful (“The Cost of Ignorance,” Fall 2005). But I must take exception to some misrepresentations of my positions on some issues.

Silber makes it sound like I attack scholarship (tuition-discounting) programs as evil when he writes: “[Vedder] unflatteringly compares universities to the 19th-century robber barons who used variable pricing to forge their monopolizing trusts.” Aside from the fact that as an economic historian I have long been critical of the robber-baron characterization of 19th-century industrialists, I did not even claim that tuition discounting is inherently bad, only that it is a factor in rising sticker prices.

He claims high salaries are needed for universities to compete for scientific talent. While that may be true, the majority of university employees are not superstar scientists, and many of them are sharing in the largesse arising from the government doing the economic equivalent of dropping money out of airplanes over campuses and homes of university students. Silber’s sensitivity on this issue is understandable, given the fact that he is one of the Gang of Five—the first five university presidents to be paid more than \$1 million each in annual salary. Somehow, I suspect Boston University could have found a dynamic leader—even Silber—available for less money, say, \$500,000 a year.

He asserts that “most professors spend 40 to 60 hours a week on their research in addition to their teaching.” Even notoriously inaccurate and inflated self-reported data for the U.S. Department of Education do not show the typical professor does anywhere near 40 hours of research weekly, for a normal (say, 50-week) work year. His assertion that “overhead recovery from research grants typically helps subsidize undergraduate education” is an interesting, albeit empirically unverified, claim. Certainly, overhead grants are not designed for



that purpose. The gradual lowering of teaching loads to sustain research by non-grant supported faculty is consistent with my view that undergraduate teaching has been deemphasized, independent of funded research grants.

Finally, the characterization of schools like the University of Phoenix as “parasitic on the larger academic world” shows an elitism and comparative indifference to meeting the legitimate academic needs of people, not all of whom meet the selective criteria applied by schools such as Boston University. I have long admired John Silber, but his attitude suggests he may be part of the problem, not the solution, to issues of affordability and access in American higher education.

Richard Vedder
Ohio University
Athens, OH

John Silber replies:

I concluded that Professor Vedder considers tuition-discounting programs “wrong” (rather than “evil”) because that’s what his book says. He notes with disapproval that universities require students applying for scholarships to submit information about family income. “If a private business were to try to require similar information of customers,” Vedder writes, “it would likely be referred to the Attorney General or other law enforcement types for possible prosecution.” In the next sentence, he observes that the “giving of differential rebates by the railroads in the late nineteenth century led to the earliest federal regulatory efforts.” If such practices are not wrong, what would be the basis for regulation or prosecution?

Vedder is right that there is a wide variety in the hours that professors work, something I acknowledged in complaining about “faculty deadbeats.” No doubt the underperformance of some brings down the total numbers of hours reflected in the Department of Labor statistics that he simultaneously cites and denigrates. Not all professors do research; those professors that bring in large grants, however, do conduct research for about 40 to 60 hours a week. The most dedicated teachers spend more than 30 hours a week preparing for class and often spend 10 to 20 hours a week grading and commenting on papers and exams. Having conducted reviews of thousands of faculty for more than 30 years, I trust my own measurement of the hours faculty worked more than data that even Vedder acknowledges is deeply flawed.

Vedder must be disingenuous to deny that overhead recovery subsidizes undergraduate

education. Overhead income is used to build classrooms and laboratories for students; it also helps to pay for fellowships and additional faculty who teach courses that researchers are relieved from teaching. Virtual online universities like the University of Phoenix are clearly parasitic on genuine universities for the latter are the source of online universities’ faculty. Online universities do no research; the research findings they use are borrowed from work done by faculties at real universities. These online degree mills are academic cuckoos laying their eggs in the nests of bona fide institutions. In accusing me of “elitism,” Vedder resorts to a charge that anyone who has insisted on high academic standards will recognize as the rejection of merit.

Finally, Vedder claims I earn a salary in excess of \$1 million, a figure he apparently pulled from a headline in the *Chronicle of Higher Education*. Had Vedder read the article, he would have found that the *Chronicle* reported my salary to be \$183,000; other income included a one-time payment of \$513,333 in replacement of unused sabbatical leaves over 30 years of service and \$334,241 in taxable phantom income from an insurance policy. But such a fair assessment of my finances would not have served his *ad hominem* argument.

REAGAN’S EIGHTIES

I am pleased that Ramesh Ponnuru’s thoughtful review treats my critique of Reagan and Reaganism as “communitarian”—some conservative reviewers predictably bristled at any questions raised about their hero and failed to recognize my attempt to analyze Reagan in a balanced way which necessarily involves some criticism, from the right and the left (“Rerunning Reagan,” Fall 2005).

I would, however, like to respond to two issues the review raised. For starters, Ponnuru claims that I don’t make the case that Reagan “invented” the 1980s. This charge admittedly stirs up a hornet’s nest of methodological vexations regarding the relationship between politics and culture, as well as the nature of the “zeitgeist,” just who shapes it and how. Ponnuru neglects the essence of my argument, which is that Reagan shaped a particular storyline and through that narrative hijacked and integrated various cultural phenomena into his broader vision. The book looks closely, for example, at how Reagan and his aides turned the 1980 repudiation of Jimmy Carter into the mythical “Reagan Mandate.” The book builds up to the 1984 election, arguing that the “Morning in America” apple pie and prosperity campaign

shaped the overall perceptions of the decade—even as I acknowledge many deviations in reality from this triumphal Reagan storyline.

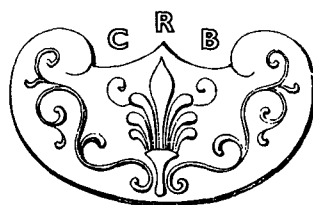
The book does contain various Reagan pronouncements (with many more left on the cutting room floor) celebrating American prosperity, taking credit for the boom, and viewing American good times as proof of national virtue. This leads to Ponnuru’s second major criticism that “Troy never grapples with the possibility that increased selfishness was practically an inevitable consequence of prosperity. That is, he never explains what alternative policies or rhetoric Reagan could have used to avoid it.” To this charge, I will plead partially guilty. This is a work of history, not philosophy, and a narrative history at that. As a historian my job is to explain what happened, to assess the effects, and not to speculate too much about what could have been or should have been.

Still, within those limitations—limitations, which I should say, I enjoy because they keep such books more rooted, more real, and more readable—I argue that this is a bigger issue which transcends Reagan and the 1980s. I note that “Reagan proved no more willing than Roosevelt, Kennedy, or Johnson had been to demand sacrifices.” This point underscores that Reaganite hedonism was not some Republican or late 20th-century disease. In fact, it is rooted in the individualistic and capitalist nature of American culture, economy, and society.

The central issue here, which I address repeatedly, involves the irony that for all the praise and condemnation Reagan received for being a traditionalist, he was in fact a modernist in so many ways both culturally and politically. The fact that Reagan governed in the feel good tradition of American politics is certainly not a crime. But for all the claims that Reagan was trying to take Americans back to some 1950s dystopia where groupthink smothered every independent thought and impulse, it is important to note that actually the opposite was true.

Reagan’s 1980s continued America’s mad post-World War II rush toward a world of individualism and indulgence, a world, as my “communitarian critique” notes, that showers the vast majority of American citizens with unprecedented blessings while also unleashing them from many of the traditional moorings, which rooted individuals and communities for centuries. This tension remains one of America’s central challenges today.

Gil Troy
McGill University
Montreal, QC
Canada



THE GOLDWATER MYTH

Why Barry Goldwater was not a "Goldwater conservative."

Essay by Andrew E. Busch

"DURING THE CAMPAIGN OF 1964, [he] was our incorruptible standard-bearer," recalled William F. Buckley, Jr., in his 1998 obituary of Barry Goldwater, the career senator from Arizona, 34 years after the watershed. Goldwater, of course, was defeated resoundingly on Election Day, winning only six states. "It was the judgment of the establishment that Goldwater's critique of American liberalism had been given its final exposure on the national political scene," Buckley continued. "But then of course 16 years later the world was made to stand on its head when Ronald Reagan was swept into office on a platform indistinguishable from what Barry had been preaching."

Strange, then, that these days many commentators believe that Goldwater's conservatism was a different species from Reagan's and, especially, from George W. Bush's. Though admittedly an economic conservative, Goldwater has become an icon of *opposition* to social conservatism. When the 2004 Republican national convention showcased social liberals like Arnold Schwarzenegger and Rudy Giuliani, George F. Will proclaimed, "[Goldwater's] kind of conservatism made a comeback." By "Goldwater conservatism" Will meant "muscular foreign policy backing unapologetic nationalism; economic policies of low taxation and light regulation; a libertarian inclination regarding cultural questions."

Will was merely restating the consensus view. Darcy Olsen, president of the Phoenix-based Goldwater Institute, argued on the fifth anniversary of Goldwater's death that "Goldwater conservative" had "a different meaning than just saying, 'I am a Republican,' because when you say 'I am a Republican,' people assume that you're involved in the Moral Majority. It's its own brand...very libertarian." Senator John McCain said that Goldwater "disliked the religious right, because he felt they were intolerant, because Barry was not only conservative, but he was also to a degree libertarian."

What does the notion that Goldwater was a libertarian mean? First, it suggests that the cultural Right has abandoned true conservatism. It implies that presidents like Reagan and Bush, who have relied heavily on socially conservative voters, deviate from Goldwater's rugged and pure frontier conservatism. And then there is the implication, appearing frequently in the mainstream media, that Republicans must move back in Goldwater's direction if they are to reclaim their intellectual credibility.

But this interpretation happens to be wrong: it overlooks the role of social issues in the origins of the conservative movement. William F. Buckley, Jr.'s, *God and Man at Yale* (1951) complained not only about economic collectivism but also about rampant agnosticism and atheism among Yale's faculty. Ever since, the conservative movement has been as concerned with religious and moral issues as with economic and

libertarian ones. Goldwater's 1964 campaign actually shaped the social conservatism of the modern Republican Party in at least three crucial respects: his view of human nature and the American republic; his concern over the moral deterioration of American society; and his stand on several key policy questions.

Human Nature

GOLDWATER ARTICULATED A VIEW OF the American Founding and America's purpose, as well as the nature of man, that was fundamentally moral, even religious, in character. In the introduction to his bestselling *The Conscience of a Conservative* (1960), Goldwater argued, "The laws of God, and of nature, have no dateline." Conservative principles "are derived from the truths that God has revealed about his creation." In the first chapter, he (and his ghostwriter, L. Brent Bozell) wrote:

The root difference between the Conservatives and the Liberals of today is that Conservatives take account of the *whole* man, while the Liberals tend to look only at the material side of man's nature. The Conservative believes that man is, in part, an economic, an animal creature; but that he is also a spiritual creature with spiritual needs and spiritual desires. What is more, these needs and desires re-



flect the *superior* side of man's nature, and thus take precedence over his economic wants. Conservatism therefore looks upon the enhancement of man's spiritual nature as the primary concern of political philosophy.... Man's most sacred possession is his individual soul.

The 1964 Republican platform, the handiwork of committed Goldwaterites, declared:

Much of today's moral decline and drift—much of the prevailing preoccupation with physical and material comforts of life—much of today's crass political appeals to the appetites of the citizenry—can be traced to a leadership grown demagogic and materialistic through indifference to national ideals founded in devoutly held religious faith. The Republican Party seeks not to renounce this heritage of faith and high purpose; rather, we are determined to reaffirm and reapply it.

In his speech accepting the 1964 presidential nomination, Goldwater extolled "freedom under a government limited by the laws of nature and of nature's God." He warned that

those who elevate the state and downgrade the citizen must see ultimately a world in which earthly power can be substituted for Divine Will, and this Nation was founded upon the rejection of that notion and upon the acceptance of God as the author of freedom.

Reagan and Bush later echoed this language.

Goldwater decried the general moral decline of the time. On the campaign trail, he asked, "What's happening to us? What's happening to our America?" His campaign ran several television spots on this theme, which he called simply the "moral issue." In one commercial an announcer shouts, "Graft! Swindle! Juvenile delinquency! Crime! Riots!" before Goldwater proclaims: "Let this generation of Americans set a standard of responsibility that will inspire the world."

Another spot linked the corruption of government officials to moral deterioration. Goldwater exclaims, "Americans everywhere are indignant about the moral decay in Washington," while the narrator calls on voters to "put conscience back in government." A third advertisement asked "What has happened to our America? We build libraries and galleries to hold the world's greatest treasury of art—and we permit the world's greatest collection of smut to be freely available anywhere." A fourth featured

Goldwater speaking directly into the camera:

Is moral responsibility out of style? Our papers and our newsreels and yes, our own observations, tell us that immorality surrounds us as never before. We as a nation are not far from the kind of moral decay that has brought on the fall of other nations and people.... [The] philosophy of something for nothing, [the] cult of individual and governmental irresponsibility, is an insidious cancer that will destroy us unless we recognize it and root it out now.

Goldwater made morality the centerpiece of a 30-minute televised address that aired on CBS on October 20, 1964. After citing George Washington's dictum, "Of all the dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity, religion and morality are indispensable supports," Goldwater said, "The moral fiber of the American people is beset by rot and decay," and pledged "every effort to a reconstruction of reverence and moral strength."

The campaign also produced, but did not air, a television program called "Choice." It focused on the "moral issue," and featured disturbing footage of topless bars, wild beatnik parties, drunken college students, and riots by both whites and blacks. Goldwater declined to use the film in the end, but only, it seems, because he feared that scenes of blacks rioting would introduce unseemly racial overtones into the campaign. But he had no inherent objection to addressing the other issues raised in the show.

Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr.'s *History of American Presidential Elections* included a scathing contemporaneous account from John Bartlow Martin: "Goldwater's moral strictures soon began to sound preachy; he almost castigated Americans for their wickedness.... Goldwater looked not only like the mad bomber, but the half-crazed moral zealot." Sympathetic observers would characterize his message differently, but what is clear is that Goldwater hardly eschewed moral, social, and cultural themes.

The Rise of the Moral Issue

NOR DID HE DISCUSS THESE THEMES in outline only. He and his party took a socially conservative stand on a number of policy issues. The 1964 GOP platform endorsed a constitutional amendment to overturn the Supreme Court's school-prayer decisions and to permit voluntary school prayer. In his CBS televised address, Goldwater asked, "Is this the time in our nation's history for our Federal Government

to ban Almighty God from our classrooms?" He answered: "Ours is both a religious and a free people. Over years past we have encountered no difficulty in absorbing that religious character into our state institutions, while at the same time preserving religious liberty and separation of church and state." Goldwater pointed out that his Democratic opponents ignored far more than just school prayer: "you will search in vain for any reference to God or religion in the Democratic platform." The Republican platform called for enactment of legislation "to curb the flow through the mails of obscene materials"; it criticized the Democratic administration and Congress for resisting tuition tax credits; and, not least, it emphasized the rise in crime as a moral issue, not merely a sociological one.

The Conscience of a Conservative devoted an entire chapter to education, anticipating its importance in the eyes of social conservatives. Goldwater paraphrased Dorothy Sayers when he wrote that Americans must "recapture the lost art of learning." He argued that

in our attempt to make education 'fun,' we have neglected the academic disciplines that develop sound minds and are conducive to sound characters.... We have forgotten that the proper function of the school is to transmit the cultural heritage of one generation to the next generation.

As a solution, he advocated a renewed emphasis on basic subjects, within the context of local control of schools.

In *The Making of the President 1964*, political journalist and election chronicler Theodore White wrote:

Goldwater could offer—and this was his greatest contribution to American politics—only a contagious concern which made people realize that indeed they must begin to think about such things. And this will be his great credit in historical terms: that finally he introduced the condition and quality of American morality and life as a subject of political debate.... Yet he had no handle to the problem, no program, no solution—except backward to the Bible and the God of the desert.

It's worth reflecting on this paragraph. Writing in 1965, White of course could not have predicted Goldwater's contribution to the long-term rise of conservatism. Nonetheless, this respected center-left analyst held that the Republican nominee's "greatest contribution to

American politics" and his "great credit in historical terms" lay not in any impact he might have had on foreign or economic policy, but in the way he forced the "moral issue" onto the national agenda. White also had no difficulty identifying Goldwater's prescription: "the Bible and the God of the desert."

It should come as no surprise, then, that a number of veterans of the Goldwater effort later made names for themselves as leaders of the burgeoning grassroots movement of social conservatives. As Goldwater biographer Lee Edwards has pointed out, "almost all the leaders of the New Right...were drawn into politics because of [Goldwater]," figures like Phyllis Schlafly, Richard Viguerie, Paul Weyrich, and Morton Blackwell. For them, the transition was seamless.

Goldwater's move away from social conservatism came only in the twilight of his Senate career—and more starkly after he had left the Senate in 1987. Throughout the 1970s, he opposed abortion on demand and taxpayer funding of abortions. (He wavered on a constitutional amendment restricting abortion.) In 1980, in the midst of his last and most difficult Senate race, he endorsed the Human Life Amendment. Only in his final term did he adopt a pro-choice position, voting in 1983 against a constitutional amendment that would have reversed *Roe v. Wade* and returned legislative authority over abortion to the states. In 1984, he reversed his 1964 position by voting against a constitutional amendment to restore voluntary prayer to public schools. As late as 1985 he opposed "gay rights" legislation. Only in 1993, six years after leaving the Senate, did he change his view.

Goldwater's shift was largely a reaction against the leaders of the New Right, for whom his dislike grew stronger as their influence increased. In 1981, Goldwater said of the leader of the Moral Majority, "Every good Christian should kick [Jerry] Falwell in the ass." He also had personal reasons: one daughter and three granddaughters of his had had abortions; and a grandson and a grandniece were homosexual. In 1937, his wife, Peggy, had become a founding member of Planned Parenthood of Arizona, and the couple remained active in the organization throughout Goldwater's Senate career. Though he initially rejected Planned Parenthood's position on abortion, his long association with the group would ultimately make a convert of him. For Goldwater, private considerations like these sometimes trumped abstract philosophy.

Liberty and Morality

SO HOW HAS THE MYTH DEVELOPED OF the great gulf between "Goldwater conservatism" and Reagan's and Bush's? To begin with, several of the hot-button issues that later mobilized social conservatives *en masse* were non-issues in 1964, or had barely begun to stir. The '60s counterculture was inchoate, as was radical feminism. The downward spiral of social trends had just begun, as had the Left's crusade to obliterate religion from public life. Key court decisions on abortion, criminal rights, and gay rights lay in the future. Consequently, a distinct mass movement of religious traditionalists—a "Religious Right" with tens of thousands of foot soldiers—did not exist for the Goldwater campaign to incorporate.

(To be sure, an intellectual movement of social traditionalists, including Russell Kirk, existed already and backed Goldwater.)

When Goldwater underwent his transformation as the years wore on, liberals rushed to embrace him. *This* Goldwater became every liberal's favorite conservative—not the historic figure who had condemned moral decay, extolled the religious underpinnings of American society, championed school prayer, inveighed against big government, and helped launch the modern conservative movement. Yet it was the latter Goldwater who ran for president, who galvanized Reagan and pointed the way to a long-term Republican electoral realignment.

Conservatives today need to revive Goldwater's argument in the '60s, and Reagan's in the '80s, that liberty is not only compatible with morality, it depends on it. Limited government cannot long coexist with a collapse of moral order; and an unlimited government is usually the consequence of an amoral society. Sweden, for instance, has both one of the most hedonistic societies in Europe and one of its most smothering welfare states. When in 1964 Goldwater told the graduating class of the Pennsylvania Military College that "it is impossible to maintain freedom and order and justice without religious and moral sanctions," he at once echoed George Washington and Alexis de Tocqueville, presaged Reagan, and issued a clarion call for future generations.

Andrew W. Busch is professor of government at Claremont McKenna College, and author most recently of Reagan's Victory: The Presidential Election of 1980 and the Rise of the Right (University Press of Kansas).



Book Review by James Q. Wilson

AMERICA'S MAYOR

The Prince of the City: Giuliani, New York, and the Genius of American Life,
by Fred Siegel. Encounter Books, 386 pages, \$39.50



MODERN POLITICS IS OFTEN ABOUT little more than adding another government program—or demonizing opponents in order to attract marginal voters. Yet from time to time a statesman comes to power who breaks the mold and tries to govern against the grain. Ronald Reagan did that in the 1980s for the nation. And Rudy Giuliani did it the 1990s for New York City.

Giuliani, as everyone knows, became wildly popular after he handled his city's response to the terrorist attacks of September 11. But many people do not know that in his eight years as mayor before 9/11, he rescued New York City from becoming a Third World basket case that would have driven out jobs and the middle class, surviving only on demands for more federal grants. Fred Siegel, a professor of history at Cooper Union, has recovered the full story of Giuliani in New York in his superb new book, *The Prince of the City*.

To appreciate what Giuliani did, one must first take a close look at what had happened to his city. New York Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan, who kept track of these matters, noted that in 1943 there were 44 murders by gunfire in the city and in 1992 there were 1,499. In 1943 the illegitimacy rate was 3%; in 1992 it was 45%. When Giuliani took office in 1994, the unemployment rate was 11%, far higher than the national average; and the joblessness existed despite (or perhaps because of) the fact that one-fifth of all the workers in the city were employed by the city itself. In addition, over one million New Yorkers lived on the welfare dole.

The city managed 3,000 public housing units, though perhaps this could be explained. What could not be so easily explained was that it owned 500 gas stations, 5,000 abandoned buildings, and 30,000 apartments. With a mere 3% of the nation's population, New York City spent more than one-fifth of all local social-service dollars, and in return for this generosity, Siegel notes, it had a poverty rate about as high as Mississippi's.

PEOPLE AND JOBS WERE DESERTING THE city. In the 10 years before Giuliani's inauguration, the city lost 10% of its private-sector jobs. When he took office, Harlem did not have a single supermarket or movie theater and 80% of the births in that area were out of wedlock. The city owned almost a third of Harlem's housing, and much of that was vacant. Times Square was an outdoor bazaar for sex and drugs. The Financial Control Board and the Municipal Assistance Corporation (MAC) were created to help the city deal with bankruptcy. MAC, or "Big MAC" as it was affectionately known, came into being so that it could sell bonds, funded by a share of the city's sales tax, and use the proceeds to bail the city out of some of its financial hardships.

The prevailing view among New York politicians was that there was nothing wrong with the city that higher taxes, more spending, and appeasing racial bigots couldn't fix. Mayor John Lindsay, the dashing mid-Manhattan liberal, governed in the late 1960s and early '70s in a way that made matters worse.

Siegel quotes Robert Moses, New York's premier urban planner, on Lindsay: "If you elect a matinee-idol Mayor, you're going to get a musical-comedy administration." Lindsay watched over a half million jobs leave the city while he deferred to New York's most radical black leaders. With the aid of the Ford Foundation, he inflicted on the schools an inept community control board scheme that enriched a handful of radicals such as Sonny Carson, who was later charged with killing two men and sentenced to jail for kidnapping.

Abe Beame, Lindsay's successor, watched helplessly as the city's finances were taken over by Big MAC. Ed Koch, Beame's successor, benefited from the financial boom created by the Reagan tax cuts and regulatory reforms, and was able to stabilize the city's finances. But that stabilization enabled him to spend more. After Koch, David Dinkins became mayor in 1989 and set about reasserting the values of urban liberalism. He denounced Reagan and said that it was time again to endorse "progressive" ideas.

Dinkins was a decent man who did not hesitate to condemn Louis Farrakhan, or to reproach New York fixture Al Sharpton for having concocted a false story about a young girl's being kidnapped and raped. Siegel describes Dinkins as less a classic black politician than a coalition pol, eager to do more for almost everybody. But Dinkins knew that the city lacked money, and so he promised to trim the size of the city's work force. He contracted out some city jobs to private employers, and reformed the rules that made the civil service virtually

ungovernable. (His plan was, of course, denounced by the *New York Times*.) But Dinkins could not make his ideas work, and indeed did not try very hard. He suspended the incoming police academy class because the city supposedly could not afford them, but then added thousands of new workers to the city's payroll and to the mayor's office. To pay for all of this, he tried to get more federal money. When that failed, he helped push through what Siegel calls the biggest tax increase in the city's history.

ENTER RUDY GIULIANI. HE HAD LOST TO Dinkins in the 1989 mayoral race, and his plan to run against him again in 1993 had to overcome several hurdles. Many business elites remembered Giuliani as an overly aggressive, publicity-seeking federal prosecutor who handcuffed business leaders in full view of the television cameras. The state's Conservative Party worried about his endorsement of abortion and his embrace of some aspects of the gay rights movement. Senator Al D'Amato, the leader of the state's Republican Party, felt no love for Giuliani either. And the *Wall Street Journal* reported that he had voted for George McGovern in 1972.

Despite these obstacles, Giuliani narrowly won the race. His victory owed to the fact that many Manhattan residents, though liberal, were afraid to walk the streets and voted their fears; while middle-class New Yorkers in the outlying boroughs, worried about higher taxes and fleeing jobs, voted their hopes. Giuliani won for much the same reason that Richard Riordan became mayor of Los Angeles: jobs and crime.

In his first State of the City address, Giuliani said that he was going to cut the size of city government, cut taxes in order to attract jobs, and bid out many city jobs to private enterprise. Like all preceding mayors since the 1960s, he asked for more state aid, but unlike most of his predecessors he said that the city could not "tax its way out of recession."

The mayor appointed William Bratton as his police commissioner. Bratton, who had reduced crime in the subways when he ran that department's police force (and had helped reduce crime in Boston when he ran its police), brought to the New York Police Department several innovations. One of these was a policy that George Kelling and I had invented, dubbed the "broken windows" theory: attack small crimes in order to increase the level of public order and, we hoped, thus reduce more serious crime. Kelling became a key Bratton adviser. But Bratton did much more than support an attack on "broken windows." He put in place the CompStat system for holding police captains accountable on a daily basis for crime and

disorder in their precincts, and created a Street Crimes Unit that took concealed weapons off suspects found on the streets. Uniformed patrol officers were told to arrest street-corner drug dealers. The police intensified a policy, begun in the last days of the Dinkins Administration, of giving tickets to "squeegee men" who had been confronting motorists with dirty window brushes as a way of extracting (in fact, extorting) tips.

The New York Civil Liberties Union was appalled by these efforts to reduce crime by arresting criminals rather than by attacking its supposed "root causes." Many criminologists began working hard to explain that Bratton's changes did not cause the dramatic crime reduction that the city experienced in the 1990s. It is hard to measure these things precisely; after all, the NYPD's effort was not part of a controlled experiment. And it is true that crime fell in many big cities, but it fell faster and more sharply in New York. Many of the stock non-Bratton explanations are clearly false. It was not economic improvement that made a difference; the unemployment rate in New York grew until 1997, long after big crime reductions in 1995 and 1996. It is true that crime rates began to drop before Giuliani took office, but that drop, as far as we can tell, was confined to mid-town Manhattan where, as Siegel notes, Business Improvement Districts had begun funding their own anti-crime efforts. And many of these reductions were helped by the fact that Raymond Kelly had been a tough police commissioner in the waning days of the Dinkins Administration. (Now, under Mayor Bloomberg, Kelly once again holds that job.)

Giuliani began a welfare reform policy long before Congress and President Clinton had made it mandatory for all states. His central idea, according to Siegel, was reciprocity: if you were able-bodied you had to take a job in order to get welfare. "For every benefit," Giuliani said, "there is an obligation, for every right, a duty." By the time Giuliani was serving his second term, he had cut New York City's welfare rolls by a number greater than Buffalo's entire population.

New York Governor Mario Cuomo never understood any of this. Siegel quotes him as saying that "taxes do not matter for business location decisions" and that female-headed families were not a moral problem. After all, he argued, "if you took a fifteen-year-old with a child, but put her in a clean apartment, got her a diploma, gave her the hope of a job...that would change everything." Senator Moynihan gave the best response to this view: "Liberalism faltered when it turned out it could not cope with the truth."

SEPTEMBER 11 WAS, OF COURSE, GIULIANI'S defining moment. He, his aides, and above all the heroic work of New York's firefighters and police officers succeeded in rescuing about 25,000 people from the Twin Towers. Siegel claims that the 3,000 people killed were above the floors hit by the hijacked airplanes; fewer than 100 were killed who were in offices below those floors. Giuliani, who right after the attack was working in a nearby command center that began to collapse, managed to get out through the basement. From that moment on he strove to restore order by being calm, candid, and reassuring. He became America's Mayor.

But America's Mayor was no longer New York City's mayor; Giuliani had to retire because of term limits. And when he retired, he could not affirm that he had permanently altered the city's political culture. It was still in the grip of relatively unproductive public employees, and when the economy boomed before 9/11, Giuliani spent new tax money prodigiously. Nor had the racial antagonisms of key politicians diminished. The Democratic Party primary to pick a new mayoral candidate occurred on the same day as the Twin Towers collapsed. Freddie Ferrer campaigned as the very antithesis of Giuliani, demanding a 30% pay increase for school teachers, denouncing what he claimed was police brutality, and calling for an effort to empower "the other New York" by raising taxes and spending more public money. Al Sharpton, as usual, was even blunter. But Ferrer lost to a more moderate Democrat, Mark Green, who had enlisted the support of former police commissioner William Bratton. The Republican candidate, Michael Bloomberg, eked out a narrow victory with Giuliani's endorsement.

Bloomberg, who had been a Democrat until he changed his registration just before the election, met immediately after his victory...not with Giuliani, whose endorsement made him mayor, but with Ferrer and Sharpton. Once in office, he raised taxes sharply. In short, there was no reform movement in the city. Siegel concludes that Giuliani *was* the reform movement.

IN HIS BOOK TITLE, SIEGEL REFERS TO Giuliani as "the prince of the city," deliberately comparing him to Machiavelli's idea of a prince. He interprets Machiavelli as arguing that no leader can govern on the basis of Christian virtue. Instead, Siegel says, a leader must use the "virtues of the classical world: discipline, courage, and fortitude." Giuliani, he claims, tried to do this by recalling an "older set" of American virtues—enterprise, obligation, and self-discipline.

I doubt this is an argument that many close students of Machiavelli would accept. The

Florentine in fact endorsed not virtue (whether Christian or classical) but expediency. He argued for serving one's own ends, pursuing security and glory, by any means available. Machiavelli is famous for advising that it is better for a prince to be feared than loved. Siegel compares this, wrongly, to Giuliani saying it is better to be respected than loved. But fear and respect are two fundamentally different things: the first implies terror or at least the apprehension of evil; the second suggests that there is a principle at one's core rendering one worthy of respect. Siegel's book would be better if he had not embraced so readily what I think is a shallow and misleading account of Machiavelli.

The larger issue, of course, is not whether Giuliani was a Machiavellian prince (he was not) but whether he should become the president of the United States. His first challenge would be to win the Republican nomination, despite his acceptance of abortion and his

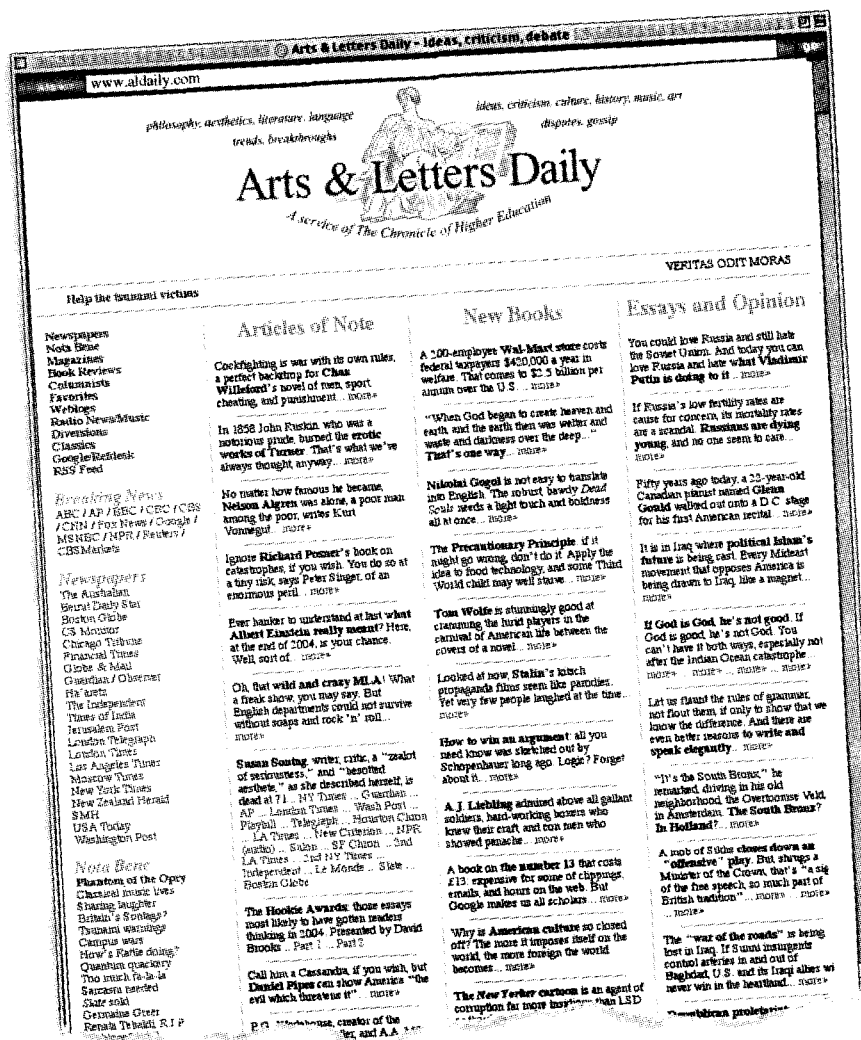
criticisms of New York Republicans such as Governor George Pataki and Senator D'Amato. That is not an easy job. It is very hard to win the Republican nomination if you support legalized abortion, just as it is almost impossible to win the Democratic one if you oppose it.

And yet, of all of the issues that might properly define a suitable presidential candidate (and I would put foreign policy at the top of the list), abortion is among the least important ones, practically speaking, because no president can do much about it. No matter who is president, legal abortions will continue. A majority of the American public does not favor reversing *Roe v. Wade*. Even if the Supreme Court overturned that decision, most state legislatures would still allow abortions. I doubt that in a general election for the presidency, abortion would much matter, but it matters decisively in presidential primary elections.

Republicans should keep in mind that, more

than four years after 9/11, Giuliani still commands Americans' respect and admiration. His worst behavior as mayor leads me to suspect that he is only as domineering and publicity-driven as many of our presidents (good or bad) have been. His best behavior as mayor suggests many of the qualities a good president should have, such as honesty, decency, and a commitment to make government work better and to enable the middle class to live better. As the presidential primaries approach, Republicans concerned with the country's moral character may want to ask themselves whether, in the present predicament, what the country needs most is a strong executive, unafraid of criticism, to prosecute the war we are in.

James Q. Wilson was a professor at Harvard and UCLA and now teaches at Pepperdine University. His most recent book is *The Marriage Problem: How Our Culture Has Weakened Families* (HarperCollins).



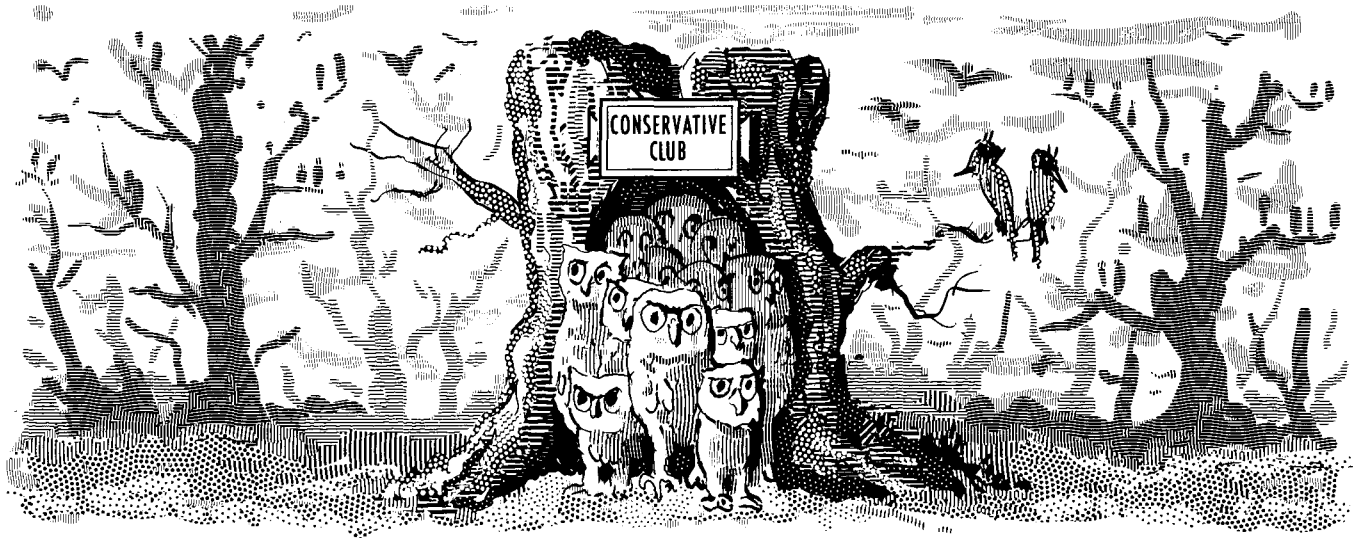
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Book Review by Ross Douthat

THE CONSERVATIVE COCOON

South Park Conservatives: The Revolt Against Liberal Media Bias,
by Brian C. Anderson. Regnery, 256 pages, \$24.95



NOT THAT LONG AGO, THE LIBERAL media simply “was the mass media,” writes Brian Anderson, senior editor of *City Journal*, in his *South Park Conservatives: The Revolt Against Liberal Media Bias*. As recently as the Reagan era, a George Will here, a William Safire there, and a few lonely bastions like *National Review* were the only counters to the biases and assumptions pervading every half-hour segment and column inch of the nation’s networks, newsmagazines, and high-profile daily newspapers.

How all that changed, how Rather and Moyers gave way to Hewitt and Hume, is a well-known but worthwhile story, and Anderson offers an engaging account of the rise of the right-wing media, and the sputtering, stupefied reaction from the liberal establishment as conservatives gate-crashed their garden party. The Right has come far enough in the last 20 years that it’s useful to remember how it all began—with Brian Lamb founding C-SPAN and Newt Gingrich taking advantage of it; with the repeal of the unfair “Fairness Doctrine” that prohibited one-sided political talk radio and the subsequent debut of Rush Limbaugh’s “talent on loan from God”; with Ted Turner promising to squash the fledgling Fox News like a bug and instead watching his network eat Roger Ailes’s dust. It’s useful, too, now that many reporters have all but acknowledged their political biases, to be reminded of how an illiberal liberal media spent decades insisting that it enjoyed a monopoly on fairness and balance.

What isn’t clear from Anderson’s look backward, however, is whether conservatives have come quite as far as he thinks they have. *South*

Park Conservatives, as its title suggests, isn’t just concerned with the rise of right-leaning media—it aspires to cover the entirety of the culture wars, from late-night comedy to the groves of academe. And once Anderson moves beyond talk radio and Fox News, his examples of cultural counter-revolution don’t always bear the argumentative weight he ascribes to them. At times, he hedges his bets, remarking sensibly that “it’s too soon to tell” if even the modern, media-savvy Right is doing more than merely holding its own. But a tone of breezy triumphalism pervades much of the book, and too often Anderson only skims the surface of things, shying away from the harder questions that loom beneath.

For instance, many of the developments that he insists favor conservatives—from the declining influence of the mainstream media (MSM) to the anti-P.C. inclinations of cable television—have less to do with the Right’s advance than with larger, post-1960s trends toward cultural fragmentation. This breakdown has been good for conservatives in certain ways: the genteel and biased liberalism of, say, Walter Cronkite or Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., no longer infuses every nook and cranny of the public sphere. But it’s worth wondering whether trading in a Cronkite for a Paris Hilton—that is, stultifying old-guard liberalism for vulgar libertinism—really represents such a great victory for the Right.

True, the current Republican majority probably wouldn’t exist without the alternative media universe that conservatives have created amid the rubble of the old establishment. But *South Park Conservatives* is supposed to be about culture, not Congress, and once you move to

the realm of arts and ideas, manners and mores, the impact of Fox News and talk radio is harder to gauge. The new conservative media infrastructure is ideally suited to rapid-response punditry and rallying the base, but it’s not really an *alternative* to the major cultural institutions—the big dailies, networks, universities, and Hollywood studios. Talk-show hosts and bloggers criticize the mainstream media’s excesses, but rarely do any reporting of their own. Conservative think tanks provide a corrective to Ivy League liberalism, but aren’t in the business of actually educating undergraduates and churning out Ph.D.s. The *O’Reilly Factor* can give a right-leaning movie a much-needed boost, but aside from a few outliers like *The Passion of the Christ*, it isn’t clear that Hollywood has become any more hospitable to conservative values and themes in the last decade or so.

ANDERSON TRIES TO MAKE THE CASE that in certain areas, the Right is moving beyond parasitism to parity: he celebrates the emergence of conservative publishing imprints like Crown Forum and Sentinel, and the appearance of right-leaning academic institutes like Princeton’s James Madison Program. But the fact that publishers have discovered the money to be made in right-wing books doesn’t necessarily tell us anything about whether conservative writers have succeeded in escaping the intellectual ghetto—especially when many of the right-leaning imprints hailed by Anderson seem more interested in turning up the next Ann Coulter than an heir to Allan Bloom or James Q. Wilson.



Similarly, the climate in the American university may be less politically correct, and less politicized in general, than in past decades, but a turn away from P.C. isn't the same as a move toward conservatism. "The Left's iron hold on academe is beginning to loosen," Anderson insists, but the case he makes is long on anecdotes, mostly from conservative students and activists like David Horowitz, and short on compelling evidence. College students today are unquestionably more hawkish (at least prior to the Iraq war, whose aftermath has pushed many doveward) and less stridently socialist than a generation ago (not least because of the size of the salaries they'll be earning after graduation), but their politics are more centrist and Clintonian than they are conservative. The institutional culture at most elite schools is still unremittingly hostile to conservative ideas, and there's little sign that the liberal ice is cracking in faculty lounges and administrative offices. A few conservative professors and campus newspapers do not a counterrevolution make. The '60s Left actually took over academia, remember, whereas the 21st-century Right seems content merely to lob stones through the university's more vulnerable windows.

THEN THERE'S THE EVER-MORE-LIBERTINE pop-culture scene, from the *Maxim*-Britney axis of hedonism at the lowbrow end to the self-satisfied lifestyle liberalism of highbrow novels and Oscar-bait movies. "Many young people" may be turning "to family values (at least in theory) with the enthusiasm of converts," as Anderson says, but you wouldn't know it from the youth-culture trends in movies, music, clothes, and magazines. Even *South Park*, Anderson's prize example of right-leaning pop culture, is more anti-liberal than pro-conservative. The show gleefully mocks liberal pieties, but does so, one suspects, as much from expediency as conviction, for those happen to be the pieties that dominate the lives of Comedy Central's target audience, well-off teens and twentysomethings. This makes for superb satire, and conservatives shouldn't feel bad about laughing along with it,

but the adolescent libertarianism that *South Park* promotes isn't anything like a real conservatism.

Anderson might retort that you don't look for Burkean messages in a scatological television show. But in that case, he needs to provide a few solid, non-*South Park* examples to back up his assertion that "a right-leaning news and culture junkie could flick across the television channel array these days and never feel alone." Sure, there's Fox News and C-SPAN and perhaps the History Channel, but on the creative side of the dial, Anderson quickly finds himself celebrating the lousy and the obscure, claiming preposterously that Dennis Miller's dreadful, since-cancelled CNBC show was "riveting television," or heaping praise on mediocrities like Colin Quinn and deservedly marginal figures like Republican stand-up comic Julia Gorin, just because they have a flair for the politically incorrect. For decades, conservatives have rolled their eyes at liberal critics who confused political correctness with artistic merit, whether it was Toni Morrison winning the Nobel Prize or *American Beauty* taking home Best Picture. Anderson has no business falling into the same trap.

This kind of cheerleading suggests a danger for conservatives that *South Park Conservatives* scarcely addresses, the danger of cocooning. The old liberal media establishment was often described, all-too-accurately, as a left-wing echo chamber, rarely penetrated by the clamor of reality. Now the Right has its own mini-establishment, which likewise runs the risk of becoming less a forum for original ideas than a museum case for stale assumptions.

You can already see this echo-chamber tendency in the right-wing bloggers and pundits who eagerly pounce on every liberal folly, however minor, while passing over conservative blunders in silence, or frantically spinning GOP dross into gold. Confident that the Right has won the war of ideas, too many conservatives don't bother to grapple with liberalism as it actually exists, preferring instead to train their fire on straw men and minor-league extremists. And secure in the knowledge that the hated MSM will always misinterpret the world,

conservatives—including, by his own account, the current occupant of the White House—often close their ears to the things that the liberal media gets right, preferring to filter their news through more congenial outlets.

ANDERSON IS NO EXCEPTION TO THIS disquieting trend. Seen through his red-state-colored glasses, the rise of the blogosphere is an "explosive change that is shaking liberal media dominance"—a claim that might have been tempered by at least some mention of how the leftist blog Daily Kos or the Deaniacs easily turned the internet to left-wing ends. He seems to have no enemies to the right: in Anderson's telling, an embarrassment like Michael Savage becomes a "firebrand," while the Swift Boat Veterans' patchwork of largely baseless accusations was an "explosive anti-Kerry book" that treacherous Borders employees tried to squash. And he uncritically celebrates the blogs and pundits who attacked every negative report from Iraq as "relentless pessimism and antiwar spin"—even though, two years on, the pessimistic MSM dispatches hold up better than the glass-half-full assumptions of many right-wingers. Every political party and administration needs its cheerleaders, of course, but Anderson is far too smart to play this kind of knee-jerk role, and it's a shame to see him lapse into it so easily.

None of these failings makes what *South Park Conservatives* has to say, in the main, any less important or any less encouraging. It's a good thing that conservatives are fighting back against the biases of the mainstream media. It's a great thing that an illiberal liberalism no longer dominates the national discourse. It's marvelous news that political correctness seems to be on the run. But having spent a generation complaining about liberalism's less-than-intimate relationship with reality, conservatives need to think hard about whether they're in danger of spinning themselves a similar cocoon.

Ross Douthat is an associate editor at the *Atlantic Monthly* and the author of *Privilege: Harvard and the Education of the Ruling Class* (Hyperion).



Book Review by Joseph Tartakovsky

PICTURES WORTH A THOUSAND LIVES

The Other War: Israelis, Palestinians and the Struggle for Media Supremacy,
by Stephanie Gutmann. Encounter Books, 280 pages, \$25.95



STEPHANIE GUTMANN IS A TALENTED American journalist who has covered the Israeli-Palestinian conflict for a variety of publications. *The Other War* is a carefully researched, on-the-ground account of the media skirmishes that take place each day and collectively determine how that conflict is portrayed to the world. Her book, detailed and convincing, is written with a wry wit that makes it a pleasure to read, despite the gravity of her subject.

The first half of *The Other War* is a series of vivid reconstructions of the major incidents in the Second Intifada, which the late Yasser Arafat launched in fall 2000. Parallel to the "actual ground war in which people died," she writes, "there was a war of competing narratives played out in the mass media." Her argument is that this war of narratives is often the more consequential of the two. Of course, propaganda wars in concert with real wars have been in fashion since Moses said some things about the Amalekites, and on the same territory no less. But after 35 centuries, something changed. "[T]he first Gulf War happened and television producers discovered world conflict as a riveting form of 'reality programming.'" Technology was the enabling factor: "Satellites, digital cameras and the internet made transmission of text and visual content nearly instantaneous." Today's media war is driven by the same ancient impulses, but now, like the technology on which it relies, it is instant and infinite.

Gutmann believes that Israel has been steadily defeated on the media front, and with deadly consequences. In March 2002, for instance, Israeli army planners were preparing a full-scale assault against West Bank terrorist networks. But they recalled the public-relations

pummeling the country had endured during the previous two years, in which the United Nations, Amnesty International, Physicians for Human Rights, and others routinely condemned Israel for "excessive force." And so, instead of lightning air strikes, Operation Defensive Shield relied on door-to-door raids, resulting in the deaths of 23 Israeli soldiers. Military superiority over its enemies is no advantage if Israel is continually dissuaded from using it.

In the media war, Israel has three disadvantages. The first is an open society, which allows reporters (and filmmakers and activists and human-rights observers) the freedom to roam, record, and interview in first-world comfort. This has saddled Israel with what may be the world's highest per capita concentration of reporters. Jerusalem is host to 350 permanent foreign news bureaus, as many as New York, London, or Moscow; the volume of reportage on Israel, Gaza, and the West Bank is 75 times greater than on any other area of comparable population. This obsessive attention necessarily distorts, by casting the Israel-Palestinian war in a theatric, world-historical light.

In the last decade, around 4,500 Israeli and Palestinian lives have been lost to the fighting. The Russo-Chechen war has killed 50,000 (11 times as many), the Darfur crisis has killed 180,000 (40 times as many), and the Congolese civil war has killed 3.5 million (778 times as many). But very few Americans can call to mind images of the ghastly violence in Chechnya, Sudan, or Congo—or even identify the warring parties—because these are places so dangerous that the *New York Times* simply cannot responsibly send a reporter there, much less a bureau.

IF FREEDOM IS DISADVANTAGEOUS, THIS goes double when you happen to abut a shameless, propagandizing Arab dictatorship. According to Gutmann, the Palestinian Authority under Arafat used "the combat theatre (the West Bank, Gaza, and inside Israel) as a kind of soundstage." Those famous scenes of Palestinian boys with rocks confronting soldiers, for example, are usually choreographed. Palestinian youths, exhorted by parents, teachers, and their televisions to pelt Israeli soldiers, are so conscious of the media presence themselves that they often don't start in with the stones until photographers arrive. Israeli soldiers are actually forewarned of clashes when film crews suddenly materialize. (Coalition forces have experienced the same phenomenon in Iraq.)

How do these reporters or photographers, on a quest for dramatic stories and footage, know where the "spontaneous" violence is to "erupt"? One or another foot soldier in their "small army of Palestinian fixers" is tipped off by the attackers. The Associated Press, Reuters, and Agence France-Press (which together supply 80% of news images to the world media) require the assistance of natives who speak the local language, know who's who, and can get things done. These hired locals, in turn, make decisions about where to drive and what to translate (or leave un-translated).

The Palestinian regime isn't brutal in the way of Saddam Hussein's Iraq, but its operatives are trained in the same school of media manipulation. On September 12, 2001, as the Middle East awoke to the attacks in New York and Washington, D.C., Palestinians in several cities took to the streets. The celebration in Nablus, estimated at 3,000 people, was filmed by an A.P. photographer who forwarded the



footage to his bureau in Jerusalem. Before it hit the wire, the photographer called his bureau again, this time sitting in the Nablus governor's office with guns to his head. The reporter lived, but the truth did not. The A.P. was told by the Palestinian Authority that it "could not guarantee their safety" in the future unless the A.P. learned to be "more careful."

Regime propaganda is pervasive. TV spots feature inspirational poetry like "how beautiful is the scent of the land, which is fed from the waterfall of blood, springing from an angry body." In April 2002, an Israeli drone flying above a funeral procession in the city of Jenin caught on tape a Palestinian corpse falling off his bier, reproving his handlers, then hopping back on. It happened again in the midst of a crowd, sending bystanders fleeing in terror. It was part of an effort to inflate both the body count and the number of photo-ops.

Israel's third disadvantage is media convention itself. Gutmann reminds us that all news is constructed: "Behind every picture there is a long story and a regiment of people who brought that particular picture, of all possible pictures, to you." And construction is rarely better than its architects: "producers sitting in carpeted, climate-controlled studios in New York and London are making war their subject.... [A]nd journalists, dumped on the ground with little prior knowledge, are forced to condense and 'package' terribly complex and crucial events." The general leftism in the news media gives reporters and producers many ways of introducing their bias into the simplified narrative: "David and Goliath, Poor versus Rich, the Third World versus Western Colonialism, Man versus Machine, even you-in-third-grade versus those-guys-who-always-beat-you-up after school." With Israel and the Palestinians, the overall result is "Large Mechanized Brutes versus Small Vulnerable Brown People."

THE SECOND HALF OF THE OTHER WAR is a series of introductions to the cast of characters in this Middle East media drama, among them naïve and flamboyant journalists, venturesome photographers, spin doctors, soldiers and terrorists, and Gutmann's personal "fixer," renamed for his protection. Her interview with the *Jerusalem Post*'s Khaled Abu Toameh, probably the most famous Palestinian journalist, is particularly trenchant, not least because unlike any other Palestinian working within reach of the Palestinian regime, Toameh seems uniquely able to say whatever he pleases. (Gutmann says he is protected from on high by Israelis.)

Two of Gutmann's "case studies" from the beginning of the Second Intifada illustrate the character of this media war and the obstacles

that Israel faces: the shooting death of a young Palestinian, and the lynching of two Israelis. According to CBS News's Richard Roth, these two episodes became "defining symbols of the conflict for those on each side."

On September 30, 2000, film footage became available to the world showing a Palestinian boy, Mohammed al-Dura, who, cradled in his father's arms, is shot by Israeli soldiers. Or so it seemed. Subsequent analysis, based especially on firing angles and ballistics examinations, called the story into doubt. Israel, in fact, was probably not responsible for the shooting. But by the time the Israeli army released the findings about its unlikely guilt, the Pietà-like image had zipped around the world, eventually appearing on a Belgian postage stamp, inspiring renamed streets and squares across the Arab world, and co-starring in the propaganda film extolling the execution of *Wall Street Journal* reporter Daniel Pearl.

On October 12, 2000, less than two weeks after the al-Dura incident, two Israeli reservists took a wrong turn while driving home and were arrested by Palestinian police, taken to the local station, and lynched by a mob. One photographer happened onto the scene:

Within moments [the crowd was] in front of me and, to my horror, I saw that it was a body, a man they were dragging by the feet. The lower part of his body was on fire and the upper part had been shot at, and the head beaten so badly that it was a pulp, like red jelly.... My God, I thought, they've killed this guy. He was dead, he must have been dead, but they were still beating him, madly, kicking his head. They were like animals.

The crowd tore the photographer's camera from him and smashed it. But a colleague managed to capture the infamous image of one of the murderers holding up his bloody hands for a cheering crowd.

The two scenes provided visual scripture from which reporters sermonized about symmetry, suffering on both sides, and cycles of violence. But Gutmann discerns the tragedy, for Israel, precisely in the asymmetry:

The images were frequently paired—by the news media. But it was a forced symmetry, created by the media for its convenience and because it was more soothing and less complicated to represent the situations as the same. Consider just the two pieces of videotape by themselves, which was all anyone had to work with at this time: In 'Ramallah' we actually see perpetrators at work—men hoisting

a body to a window ledge, then shoving it off the ledge to a crowd below, whom we then see all too clearly stomping and stabbing it. In 'al-Dura,' however, we see a boy collapsing, apparently shot. That is all. In one story, most of the who, what, where and why is answered. But in 'al-Dura,' virtually everything, except that two people were shot at in front of a wall, is essentially a mystery.

Less of a mystery is that the "al-Dura" cameraman became a minor celebrity, treated to interviews at European media conferences. The "Ramallah" cameraman, on the other hand, remains unknown, while death threats forced his bureau chief to flee the region.

TOWARDS THE END OF HER BOOK, Gutmann details some of Israel's long-overdue—and successful—efforts to reverse the tide in the media war. Because her observations throughout are so scrupulous and clear-eyed, her belief that things are taking a turn for the better is encouraging, even if it remains a little hard to believe.

As Gutmann says, nearly every evil of the last three centuries—racism, apartheid, militarism, colonialism, fascism, ethnic cleansing, genocide—is routinely invoked against Israel. These are not so much criticisms of policy, mind you, but of Israel's existence, for it is understood that regimes dedicated to such evil deserve to be eliminated, not reformed. Are such criticisms confined to the political fringes? If they were, Gutmann wouldn't be able to cite a 2004 poll in which 68% of Germans agreed that Israel now conducts a "war of extermination" against Palestinians. There are ten times as many Palestinians today as in 1920, I might point out to the Germans, but fewer Jews.

At the close of *The Other War*, Gutmann writes: "Looking at the virulent, vituperative tone of European coverage, and particularly at how openly jeering it grows when Israel tries to defend itself in the media war, it is hard to imagine that any Israeli public relations staff with any amount of resources at its disposal could have an impact on Europe." She's right; there must be something more to it, and she alludes, briefly, to anti-Semitism. Earlier in the book, she mentions the hard Left's fixation with Israel and the brutality of Arab propaganda. But each receives only glancing notice. The logical next step—accounting for the forces behind and beyond the media—is outside the scope of her important book, but nevertheless essential to the whole truth about "the other war."

Joseph Tartakovsky is assistant editor of the Claremont Review of Books.

VICTORY WATCH
by Angelo M. Codevilla

THE LOGIC OF THE "PEACE PROCESS"



We keep hoping they'll come up with a Gerry Adams.
—“A U.S. intelligence official,”
Time magazine, September 26, 2005

IN 2005, THE U.S. GOVERNMENT'S "WAR ON terror," as well as its operations in Iraq, were entwined in the same tortuous logic by which they had been conceived. After redefining the mission in Iraq from finding Weapons of Mass Destruction, to building democracy, to eliminating terrorists, to enabling the Iraqis to fight for themselves—and not being serious about any of these—the Bush Administration was arguing that to withdraw would be to admit defeat. But what would victory look like?

In December, pressed from all parts of America to address that question, President George W. Bush spoke, surrounded by banners that read, "The Strategy for Victory." Yet the speech, as well as the seven-point, 35-page White House document that accompanied it, simply reiterated hopes for a united, democratic Iraq and the beneficial influence this might have. It described efforts to bolster Iraqi armed forces, foster national reconciliation, and build up the country's infrastructure. None of this amounted to a strategy any more than it ever had, because wishes are a poor substitute for explaining why anyone should expect *these* actions to produce *those* outcomes. In short, the Bush Administration never attempted logically to balance ends and means, the things it desired with the things it was doing.

In this intellectual vacuum, the U.S. was coming to the end of its war in Iraq—and entering a more dangerous relationship with the sources of terrorism. U.S. armed forces had defeated Saddam Hussein's armies and reduced their remnants from guerrilla warriors to mere terrorists (who strike mostly at Iraqis, not Americans). But American soldiers were given

no plans to eliminate the terrorists—only to endure them, while American fears of social and political engineering were supposedly fashioning a terror-free Iraq. Terror in Iraq was the manifestation of an ongoing struggle between the country's major groups, but President Bush imagined that the U.S. could involve itself in that struggle without choosing sides—even though parts of his administration were already doing so. Iraq's majority Shi'ite and Kurdish communities were poised to act decisively against the Sunni minority's Ba'ath party, but the United States restrained them. It refused to acknowledge that the majority's pursuit of its own interest provided the path to the only positive outcome of the war that had ever been possible for America. This outcome would also be a source of pressure against the remaining terrorist regimes.

In 2005, the U.S. government's dealings with these regimes, like its operations in Iraq, followed the logic of a so-called "peace process" rather than the logic of war. The Bush Administration exhibited weakness with Syria, implicit trust in Saudi Arabia, fear of Iran, and a deluded complicity with the Palestinian Authority. President Bush's policies taught these regimes that, to put it mildly, they were not risking a deathmatch with the United States. America's overall "war on terror" had become an unending hunt for individuals who mean nothing, combined with permanent, ineffectual security measures at home. The July bombings in London by native-born Muslims with ties to Arab regimes, as well as the autumn's violence by alienated Muslims in France and throughout Europe, highlighted America's inherent vulnerability as well. In short, the problem of terrorism is well beyond what Western governments have been willing to conceive, or make war against.

In fact, the widespread sense that "the war" had gone wrong encouraged Democrats to de-

mand a quick, mindless withdrawal of American troops in Iraq. The Bush team's response drew from the well of patriotism; but because it did not deal with the underlying problem, it risked drawing down that well.

Meddling in Iraq

AFTER CAPTURING SADDAM HUSSEIN, installing a (nominally) sovereign Iraqi government, and enabling Iraqis to elect their representatives, the Bush Administration argued that America should remain in Iraq to fight terrorism so as not to suffer it at home. This was implausible. Why would terrorists intent on killing Americans choose to spend themselves against heavily armed U.S. troops, rather than safely bomb school buses in America? Besides, nearly all terrorist activity in Iraq was by Iraqis against Iraqis. The ulterior answer, that America had not yet set up Iraq as a fully functioning country, was obvious. But the fighting in Iraq among Iraqis was precisely over *what kind* of functioning country, if any, Iraq would be.

In practice, the U.S. government's objective was to cajole Iraqis into a "united, democratic Iraq." But our government's many versions of that vision were self-contradictory. More important, they clashed with the fact that the vision did not accord with that of any of Iraq's major groups. And although U.S. officials tutored, pressured, and subverted the Iraqis incessantly, in the end we could not supersede their will outright. Moreover, it was by no means obvious that the order Americans might arrange would be more advantageous to America than what the Iraqis might work out for themselves. In short, the United States's presence in Iraq by now had little to do with any "war on terror." Instead, it operated to hinder and distort the Iraqis' own settlement of their scores according to the balance of power among themselves.



The Bush Administration had understood its commitment to “regime change” to involve merely the removal of some 55 high-ranking Iraqis. It learned the hard way—and even then, incompletely—that Saddam Hussein’s regime consisted of at least 2,000 persons who wielded the levers of power in Ba’athist Iraq. They never surrendered; on the contrary, they continued to fight for victory. Thanks to ready sanctuary in Syria; massive amounts of resources stashed as part of the regime’s post-invasion strategy; and the U.S. Occupation Authority’s opposition to de-Ba’athification—many party members, accordingly, were reinserted into the government—the Ba’ath party resumed its role as the country’s most cohesive force outside the Kurdish provinces. Just as important, the party faithfully represents the deepest fears and hatreds of 20% of the population: the Sunni Arabs.

Contrary to what the administration wanted to believe, the Sunni population was the bedrock of the old regime. Although they had suffered almost as much violence at Hussein’s hands as other Iraqis, he had given them powers and privileges that they had come to see as their birthright. And so the Sunnis fought to re-subjugate their fellow Iraqis. They murdered judges and intimidated witnesses at Hussein’s trial, with the Arab world’s tacit support. The Sunni view of America’s role was summed up in a local newspaper cartoon that showed Uncle Sam’s exit from bloody Iraq as passing over a bridge—controlled by a terrorist sitting at a negotiating table. The Sunnis fought to induce America into pressing their demands on other Iraqis, believing they could, by force of arms, obtain concessions from the U.S. that they could never obtain from their fellow Iraqis. They were correct. Iraq’s majority, for their part, were dismayed that the American government was negotiating with their enemies behind the backs of the native people, even as it had decades ago in Vietnam.

The Bush team denied that America’s interest lay in making war against the Sunni population. Indeed, the administration spent much of the year making sure that no one else would fight such a war, either. It sought not victory over the insurgency but compromise with the insurgency’s leaders. U.S. troops entering Sunni areas would have rocks and curses thrown at them. They would see terrorists taking refuge there, but were forbidden to do more than go after them individually. U.S. officials knew the identity and location of some 35 key insurgent leaders in Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, and Iraq itself. These men, with money and connections to Arab governments, provided the insurgency’s organization and hope. But they were off limits.

Instead, the U.S. tried to seduce Sunni leaders into representing the insurgency politically,

as Northern Ireland’s Gerry Adams represents the Irish Republican Army. In short, the Bush team sought a “peace process” in which the defenders do not destroy their attackers but instead grant them powers, in exchange for the attackers’ promise to negotiate. Alas, the attackers then sell that promise again and again, at ever higher prices.

The results of the January 30, 2005, elections disappointed the Bush Administration because they proved that the majority of Iraqis would not go along with America’s wishes. The winner, with almost a simple majority, was a coalition of Shi’ite parties. In strong second place were the combined Kurdish parties. A very distant third was the group headed by Iyad Allawi, the interim prime minister (appointed, financed, and assisted politically by the Bush team) who had led the longtime CIA campaign for an Iraq ruled by moderate Ba’athists. Allawi’s group, however, had made itself massively unpopular by its corruption, its courtship of the Ba’ath party, its concessions to Sunni demands, and by its link with the Americans.

Still, the U.S. pushed its vision. In the formation of the new interim government, and thereafter as the committee it appointed drafted a constitution for the voters’ approval in October, U.S. ambassadors John Negroponte and Zalmay Khalilzad acted virtually as the Sunnis’ political patrons. At American insistence, jobs in the government and seats on the constitution-writing committee were awarded not to those who had won the election but to Sunnis who had *not* been elected, who had worked to disrupt and discredit the elections, and who bore in many cases, as U.S. officials admitted, “blood on their hands.” The more casualties Sunni insurgents inflicted and the more mayhem they caused, the more eager the government became to “draw them in.” As Iraqis voted in December, President Bush said that the resulting government would have to be “inclusive.” So much for a democratic Iraq.

The Bush team’s actual (as opposed to rhetorical) position was that any decision by the Iraqi majority that is unacceptable to the insurrectionist minority is “divisive,” likely to fuel the war, and hence against our interests. American officials objected especially to provisions in the constitution that allowed substantial autonomy for the Kurdish region, and the option for Shi’ites to enjoy a similar autonomy. Thus in October, even as a massive majority of Iraqi voters was about to approve that constitution over Sunni objections, U.S. officials extracted an amendment that effectively nullified the constitution’s importance by letting it be amended without limit by future governments. American officials hoped that, with help from the Sunnis, they would get another chance to make

the political system fit their model; maybe even revive Allawi. The Sunnis, however, voted nine to one against the constitution, which the U.S. opposed as insufficiently centralized and “inclusive.” When Sunnis chose to vote in the December elections, American officials were overjoyed, and intended to leverage the majority’s divisions in order to reinsert Allawi as prime minister. They did not imagine that the Sunnis’ agenda was different from their own.

Nevertheless, U.S. officials extracted another concession from the government, at least on paper: former officers of Hussein’s army would be allowed to join the new Iraqi army. Most would be Sunnis. The administration exulted that some 4,000 of these officers had offered their services to the new government. Most Iraqis, however, were terrified. The Shi’ites and Kurds believe, with much evidence, that among the military and intelligence officers promoted by the Americans are many who provide intelligence and help to the insurgency. After insurgents detonated bombs inside key institutions, American officers conceded that the insurgents had infiltrated the Iraqi army and intelligence. Nevertheless, they insist on not discriminating among Iraqis. Yet discrimination is the essence of civil war, and the Iraqi majority has little doubt about who the infiltrators are: Sunni Ba’athists. They blame the Americans for putting these spies in positions to do harm. Few readers of the U.S. media know that the Iraqi armed forces are under U.S. command for administrative as well as for operational matters, and that Iraqi intelligence is quite simply run by the CIA.

Thus at the end of 2005 the Iraqi majority’s political strategy boiled down to trying to survive American meddling until the permanent government, to be formed in 2006, could demand its end. Already by November, Iraqi Prime Minister Ibrahim al-Jaffari called on American forces to restrict themselves to protecting infrastructure, e.g., pipelines, and to let Iraqis deal with Iraqis.

The Americans argued that they were in Iraq to prevent a civil war. Yet civil war was the best description of what had been happening since 2003. More precisely, this was war by, of, and for the Sunni population against the Kurds and Shi’ites. The U.S. had restrained the majority from retaliating. By the end of 2005, the resulting one-sided civil war had become unendurable.

Resolving the Conflict

IN 2004 AND 2005, ROUGHLY 30,000 IRAQI civilians—mostly Shi’ites—were killed by terrorist attacks. (On the scale of the United States, this would mean approximately half a million Americans dead and five million wounded.) The murders were often galling, in-

cluding bombings of the holiest places on the holiest days; school bombings; and shootings of job seekers and the families of officials. The American military's procedures did not keep this onslaught from growing. Inexorably, this war hardened the divisions between Iraqi society's main groups.

By 2005, the U.S. military was taking casualties without a plan for ending the war, and was well on the way to losing 20 times as many Americans in Iraq's civil war as had died overthrowing Saddam Hussein. In October, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Peter Pace, said U.S. troops would try to clear

Iraqi towns of insurgents, and then Iraqi troops would hold the towns. There was some dispute as to how new an approach this was, but everyone agreed that pursuing it seriously would require an open-ended occupation by an open-ended number of troops. But the approach assumed that Iraqi troops had a single purpose. They did not.

A few perceptive American commentators realized that continuing to try to reconcile the Iraqi irreconcilables would tilt the inevitable civil war in the wrong direction, and concluded that America's best option—what's more, its best chance of persuading the Sunnis to be

nice—was to arm the Kurds and Shi'ites and let nature take its course. Indeed, the official American position on military operations in Iraq had long been that they were intended to enable the Iraqis to fight for themselves. That position, however, had always hidden the essential question: which Iraqis? Much of the Bush team's troubles stemmed from pretending that this question did not exist.

While the U.S. Senate voted to require the administration to submit a plan for ending the war, the majority of Iraqis pulled for the United States to give the answer it should have given three years before: let them go at it. They believed that they would crush the Sunnis quickly. The Sunni Arabs, for their part, believed the Shi'ites inferior, divided, destined to be ruled by Sunnis—and then likely to help in subjugating the Kurds, just as in the past. So the Sunnis, too, wanted the Americans to lift the lid on the civil war.

How, and how soon, the Bush team lifts that lid will matter. The State Department wants to keep it on, despite the bureaucrats' eagerness for withdrawal. So, as 2005 was ending, U.S. diplomats, following the views of the Democratic Party's shadow Secretary of State Richard Holbrooke, were trying to arrange an offer by the Arab League to send troops to pacify Iraq.

But any American attempt to force troops answering to Sunni governments upon the majority of Iraqis would amount to throwing gasoline on a fire. Thus, in 2006, after three years of confused efforts, the Bush team can no longer prevent the conflict from ending in a way that has always been to America's advantage.

The Shi'ite-Kurdish government that emerged from the December 2005 elections is bound to try to recover practical sovereignty over its armed forces and intelligence service, before the untrustworthy members of the ranks get so numerous that entire Ba'athist-led units begin to defect. This purge, and the subsequent war, would be more cruel than any waged by the Americans. But it is likely to crush the Sunni insurgency. For better or worse, however, the U.S. government will try to prevent the majority from carrying out the wholesale butcheries needed to force the Sunnis into a united Iraq dominated by their former underlings.

The new Iraq would be united only nominally. Effectively, there would be two Iraqs. Kurds and Shi'ites would continue to stand together, because the Kurds are a racial island, the Shi'ites, a religious one, set apart from neighboring Iranian Shi'ites by race; and also because the embittered Iraqi Sunnis are sure to commit themselves to the Arab world's hostilities against Kurds and Shi'ites. So the Sunni side will be poor, hostile, and allied with America's enemies, while the oil-rich Iraqi majority will

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want a privileged relationship with America in exchange for help against the Arab world.

Many American elites, however, would find it difficult to take up the offer because the conventional wisdom is that America cannot afford to side against the worldwide Sunni Muslim majority. Others will be unwilling to involve themselves in what will seem a new extension of the Iraq war, which by 2006 will fast be fading into the past, unlamented.

Yet to think this way is to continue to ignore why destroying Saddam Hussein's regime had always been very much in America's interest: namely, that any number of Arab regimes, each in its own way and for its own purposes, has promoted the idea that killing Westerners in general, Americans in particular (and Shi'ites, Christians, Buddhists, etc., in the bargain), is good and profitable. This is the political cause on behalf of which terrorists terrorize. By overthrowing Saddam Hussein, the Bush team emphatically did the right thing. Alas, they made a mess of it and taught America's enemies that they have little to fear.

Avoiding War

“WE ARE MAKING THE SAME MISTAKES we made in Vietnam,” a U.S. Marine told the *New York Times* as he fought to take an Iraqi village that was part of the insurgency's supply line from Syria. He was referring to treating Syria as a “sanctuary” from which the enemy could safely wage its war. But Syria was more troublesome than that, and the mistakes were worse. Absent Syria, the Iraqi insurgency would not have amounted to much. Directly and through Hezbollah and countless groups and subgroups headquartered in Damascus, the Syrian regime had spread terror from Lebanon to Israel and the West. Worse, Syria's role as a major promoter of anti-American terror was no secret. Hence Syria inspired even more terror than it manufactured.

After the 2003 invasion, then-Secretary of State Colin Powell had pressed a helpless Syria to change its ways—so gently that he did not even mention its occupation of Lebanon. The regime answered with contempt. By 2005, President Bush cited Syria as standing in the way of a presumed democratic tide in the Middle East, and declared that Lebanon should be free. Suddenly, the leading Lebanese advocate of independence, Rafik Hariri, was assassinated. The Lebanese protested for Syria to leave them alone. The United Nations indicted the regime, which withdrew its regular troops from Lebanon but inserted more irregulars and stepped up its assassination of opponents. Syria's Ba'athists were as firmly in control as ever, playing by what

New York Times columnist Thomas Friedman calls “Hama rules.”

Bush's rules proved no match. He insisted that Syria had become intolerable, and his administration briefly considered aiming at “regime change.” But during summer 2005, the State Department and CIA prevailed in an intramural struggle much like the one that had preceded the invasion of Iraq. Bush decided that there was “no good alternative” to the regime, and hoped that indirect pressure would lead moderate Ba'athists to replace immoderate ones. The U.S. government, in short, preferred enduring the regime's enmity to the cost of making war on

it. And so it tolerated what it had called intolerable. When Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice visited Lebanon she let herself be photographed, smiling, with Syria's puppet, Emile Lahoud, whose ouster had been the cause for which Mr. Hariri had given his life. Bush spoke loudly but the contrast between success and failure, resolution and reticence, integrity and hypocrisy, was lost on few outside Washington.

In November, Secretary Rice went to Saudi Arabia to undertake what she called a “strategic dialogue.” In America's name, she asked the Saudi royal family to make a basic choice against terrorism by curtailing the massive flow of money from

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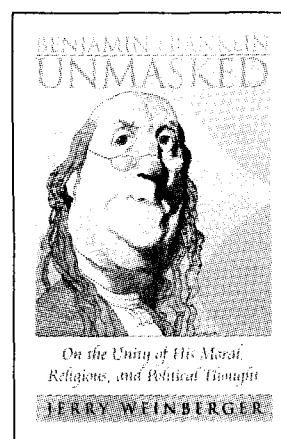
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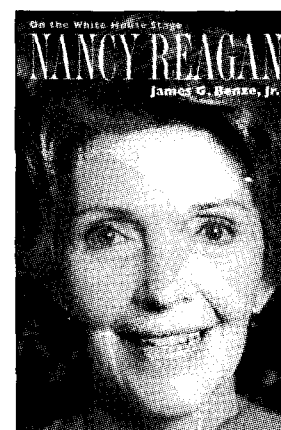


Nancy Reagan On the White House Stage

James G. Benze, Jr.

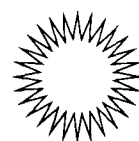
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the kingdom to anti-American forces around the world. But there was no chance of this request being taken seriously. The administration had not prepared, or even thought about, what it might do to compel the Saudis. Moreover, given the symbiotic relationship between the royal family, the Wahabi sect, and the kingdom's massive oil revenues, the Saudi government could not have complied with the request even if motivated to do so.

The Bush Administration knows that the terms "fundamentalist Islam" and "Islamofascism," which many use loosely to explain today's terrorism, are really references to some of the effects produced on Muslims by the Wahabi sect. This sect is a heresy that seeks to conquer the Islamic world—and only incidentally make war on the rest of us. Most mosques built in the world today, including in the United States, are Wahabi. Using Saudi billions, the sect has taken control or is close to control of Islamic organizations from West Africa to the American prison system, from Western Europe to the Pacific islands. In Pakistan, where a generation ago only 1% of the people considered themselves Wahabis, today 25% do. Nor, for the past two centuries, has it been possible to disentangle Wahabis and Saudis politically or financially. All Saudi royals are Wahabis (socio-politically if not intellectually), and all Wahabi hierarchs are somehow part of the royal family. Moreover, regardless of personal beliefs, Wahabism is the royal family's sole claim to legitimacy outside the tribes of the Nejd region of east-central Arabia.

So why is the Bush Administration pretending that Rice's mission is achievable? It prefers to suffer the Saudis' dangerous authority rather than think about the alternatives. One possibility would be to support the longstanding internal opposition to Saudi rule from the non-Wahabi tribes of the southwestern Hejaz. Another would be simply to stop remitting all those billions to a royal family that contributes nothing to the oil business. But that would mean war.

Meanwhile, as 2005 ended, the U.S. government was getting tough with Iran. After the Iranian government had rebuffed the proposals of three European governments and the U.N. Secretary-General to stop its reprocessing of uranium for atomic bombs—and after Iran's president had called for wiping Israel off the face of the earth—the Bush Administration pressed vigorously for the U.N. Security Council to take up the matter. There seemed to be no alternative to its doing so. Perhaps, after lengthy negotiations, the Security Council would issue a toughly worded resolution.

Theoretically, several non-verbal responses were available. The European Union, Iran's largest and most indispensable trade partner, could have prepared an embargo against Iran. But the Europeans would not think of it—especially since Russia would have trans-shipped the embargoed goods anyway. Europe could have forced Russia to cooperate by making the embargo secondary, applying it to anyone who traded with Iran. Then again, the United States could have placed a secondary trade embargo on Iran. No country in the world could afford not to trade with the U.S. and its trading partners. Such acts would have stopped the Iranian nuclear program. But that would have been war.

And so, very soon, Iran will add atomic bombs to what the potential victims of terrorist attacks will have to consider, if and when they become fearful enough.

Deluded Complicity

IN 1993 PRESIDENT CLINTON ADOPTED THE CIA's and State Department's longtime position that the Palestine Liberation Organization—the people who had pioneered anti-Western terrorism—were or could be partners for peace if given the proper incentives. Clinton called the result a "peace process."

In collaboration with the Israeli government, the U.S. helped make the PLO into the semi-sovereign Palestinian Authority, complete with money and arms. The Clinton Administration expected that the P.A. would crush terrorists within its territories. But more terrorism came from Palestinians *after* the establishment of the P.A. than before. And why not? The more the Palestinians terrorized, the more concessions they got. The Clinton team accepted dictator Yasser Arafat's denial of responsibility. After September 11, the Bush Administration acknowledged that Arafat was playing a double game. But Arafat died a natural death because the administration prevented Israel from killing him.

No sooner had Arafat's longtime deputy, Mahmoud Abbas, taken over than the Bush team invested in him all the hopes that Clinton had invested in Arafat, and even more subsidies from the U.S. treasury. In August 2005 Bush helped force Israel to deliver the Gaza strip to the Palestinian Authority's exclusive control. In November, Secretary Rice bludgeoned the Israelis to abandon control, and even direct monitoring, of the border crossing between Gaza and Egypt. The architect of this plan, James Wolfen-

son, matter-of-factly explained that, as a result, some terrorists and weapons would get into Gaza and threaten Israel. Nevertheless, it was U.S. policy that curtailing cooperation with the P.A. because of this would mean letting peace be hostage to the terrorists. Abbas, however, celebrated his control of the border by thanking the Arab "martyrs" whose sacrifices had made it possible, and pledged greater efforts to free the rest of Palestine.

And indeed as Palestinian terrorism increased throughout the fall with almost daily mortar and rocket attacks from Gaza, including the third suicide bombing of the same Israeli shopping mall, Israeli retaliation consisted primarily of raining bombs on empty buildings. The Bush Administration's response was to invest more foreign aid in the P.A. and to press Israel to grant uninspected transit rights between Gaza and the West Bank, with the strategic objective of strengthening Mahmoud Abbas. By the logic of war, this is American complicity in the destruction of Israel. But by the logic of the "peace process," the United States is doing what it should.

The U.S. government's search for an Iraqi Gerry Adams is unsurprising. In Syria, Saudi Arabia, and Palestine, the State Department and CIA found some long ago. Rhetoric notwithstanding, the policy of the United States has been not war against the sources of terrorism, but rather "peace processes" or "engagement" with people and institutions who, if given enough incentives, ostensibly will deliver peace without our having to make war.

It is self-deception to suppose that those who represent the enemy's cause politically are something other than the proper, primary target of one's war. But this is not an intellectual error. Its sources are deeper. Perhaps the clearest illustration comes from Britain. In 2005 the British government, reacting to the latest act of terrorism by the Irish Republican Army and to its political representative Gerry Adams's denial of responsibility for it, revealed that for all the years it had been dealing with Mr. Adams, it had known that he was in fact a member of the IRA's military high command. It chastised Adams for duplicity in the "peace process." But while Adams's duplicity was courageous and competent, the government's duplicity was neither.

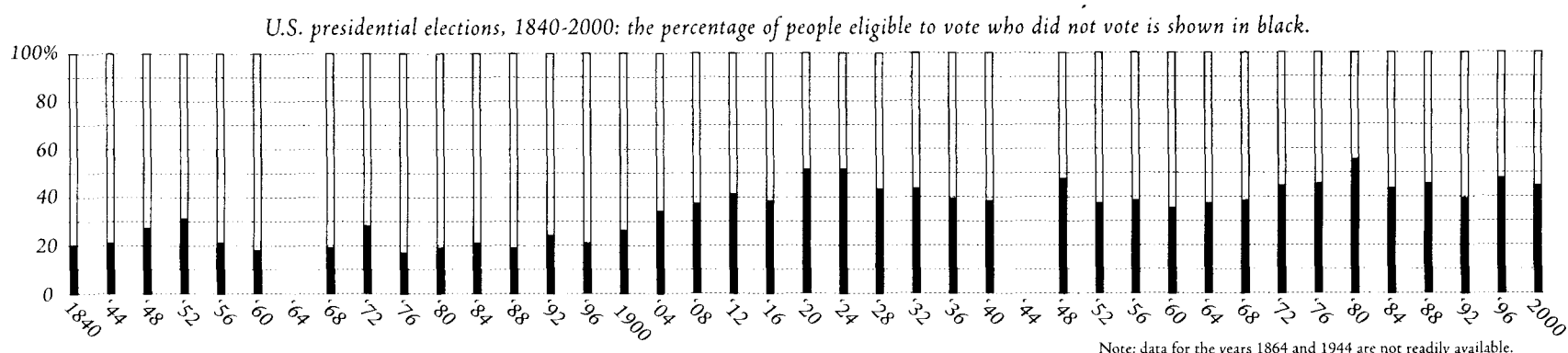
Angelo M. Codevilla is professor of international relations at Boston University, a fellow of the Claremont Institute, and the author most recently of No Victory, No Peace (Rowman & Littlefield).



Book Review by Gerard Alexander

WHERE HAVE ALL THE VOTERS GONE?

Get Out the Vote!: How to Increase Voter Turnout, by Donald Green and Alan Gerber.
Brookings Institution Press, 145 pages, \$42.95 (cloth), \$14.95 (paper)



MANY AMERICANS DON'T VOTE. AND progressive critics claim to know why: non-voters are deliberately shut out of politics by economic elites and the politicians, Republican and Democrat alike, who do their bidding. This theory alleges that parties, campaigns, free speech, and elections are little more than smoke and mirrors, obscuring the oppressive reality of millions of non-voting Americans' deliberate marginalization.

Get Out the Vote!, by Yale political scientists Donald Green and Alan Gerber, does not set out to debunk the progressive explanation of non-voting. But it does so anyway, by making clear what has been apparent for years: candidates and parties, instead of trying to keep citizens out of voting booths, have tried ever more desperately to get them in, and regularly put their limited campaign resources where their mouths are. They are often reduced to standing on doorsteps begging citizens to take the time to express their political preferences in the most basic way.

The charge that there is, in effect, a conspiracy against working-class Americans' voting has long been a favorite of progressive intellectuals, political activists, and left-liberal Democrats. Perhaps the best known of them—in no small part because their books appear on so many college reading lists—is the scholar-activist couple Frances Fox Piven and (the late) Richard Cloward, authors of *Why Americans Don't Vote* (1988; updated in 2000 as *Why Americans Still Don't Vote And Why Politicians Want it That Way*). Piven and Cloward assert that the

50-60% voter-turnout rates of the 20th century (and for that matter the early 21st) are not "natural" to American political culture, because between the 1830s and 1900 American electoral turnout reached 70-80%. Their villains are the country's economic and political elites, who supposedly sought to exclude poor and working-class Americans from the voting booth. Once turnout rates plunged, the exclusion became self-reinforcing: the main political parties took on the moderate hue of an electorate now heavily skewed toward the middle class, which further alienated the poor from formal political life. Piven and Cloward, among others, argue that this system has been maintained ever since by Republicans and corporate-friendly Democrats. The intended result is a sizable non-voting pool, disproportionately made up of low-income, low-education, and minority citizens.

This interpretation has one grand implication: if non-voters were somehow reintegrated into the electorate, U.S. politics would move dramatically to the left. As sociologist Ruy Teixeira puts it, this has been "virtually a religious principle of Jesse Jackson's Rainbow Coalition and various other left-leaning organizations." The left-liberal *Nation* has trumpeted the claim since at least the mid-1980s. Ralph Nader proposed to base his 2004 presidential run on appeals to (presumptively leftist) non-voters as well as independents. He blamed non-voting largely on the first explanation offered by Piven and Cloward: "Obstacles, and deliberate manipulations to undermine the right to vote." Michael Moore blamed it on the second: "there

is no real choice on the ballot." And third-party types aren't the only ones to believe this. In 1993, establishment Democrats pushed successfully for a "motor voter" law to encourage voter registration, expecting to reap electoral gains. Champions of Howard Dean's presidential campaign insisted that a candidate from the Democratic Party's left wing could win if he energized left-leaning independents and non-voters. For journalists, certainly, the idea that high turnout favors Democrats is an inveterate and much beloved theme.

THE PROGRESSIVE TAKE ON NON-VOTING rests on two assumptions. First, it assumes that many would-be voters are deterred by registration requirements. Second, it assumes that the rest, because they lean so heavily to the left, are alienated by moderate parties and their campaign themes. A hard Left turn, then, could presumably gain votes, not lose them for the Democrats or Naderite third parties.

This interpretation has been so reassuring to American left-liberals that they have consistently resisted scattered evidence clearly at odds with it. In the late 1980s, for example, observers like Ruy Teixeira and the University of Cincinnati's Stephen Bennett pointed out that from 1960 to 1980, registration requirements were liberalized, yet turnout continued to decline anyway. Nor did turnout surge in the 1990s, even though by Piven and Cloward's own admission, "historic barriers to voter registration...were largely abolished" by the motor-



voter law. And polls showed that non-voters, instead of having distinctively leftist political views, were actually a lot like the rest of the population. Nader, Dean, and others soldiered on, nonetheless.

The 2000 and 2004 presidential elections ought at last to lay this sagging interpretation to rest. These contests offered a near perfect test of the two assumptions underpinning the progressive view: registering and voting were less costly to citizens than ever; and unambiguously "progressive" candidates were in the race. Since 1984, political groups have poured substantial resources into getting people to register and vote. These efforts reached a high point in 2004, when armies of activists explored the best methods for encouraging voters.

GET OUT THE VOTE! IS AT ONCE AN informal guide for these activists and candidates (they helpfully recommend, for instance, equipping door-to-door canvassers with umbrellas when bad weather threatens) and a serious survey of findings amassed from "get out the vote" (GOTV) experiments. Their valuable findings point in one direction: face-to-face canvassing and leafleting are more successful at motivating people to vote than phone banks, direct mail, and email. Green and Gerber's bottom line: "Many nonvoters need just a nudge to motivate them to vote. A personal invitation sometimes makes all the difference."

In 2004, the citizenry was nudged. The *New York Times* estimates that \$350 million was spent on GOTV efforts, mostly by pro-Kerry groups like America Coming Together. In targeted states, these organizations brought registration forms to people's doors and helped fill them out; double-checked that absentee voters had mailed their ballots; and offered rides to polling places. By absorbing many of the expenses of registering and voting, they virtually eliminated the cost to citizens.

And voters did increase, from about 105 million in 2000 to about 122 million in 2004, a rise from around 57% of the adult population to around 62% (if we factor out non-citizens and non-eligible felons). In some "battleground" states, turnout rose even higher: in Ohio, from 57% in 2000 to about 66%; in Florida, from 55% to 66%; and in Minnesota, from 67% to around 75%.

But three things immediately stand out. First, these turnout levels are still considerably below the 19th-century high-water marks. Tens of millions of people who were eligible to vote did not, even if they could register at the DMV or find mail-away forms on their doorstep. Second, even when voting costs were minimized and diverse ballot options were available, progressive candidates bombed. Nader netted 2.7% of the general-election vote in 2000 and

less than one half of 1% in 2004. Al Sharpton and Dennis Kucinich contested the Democratic nomination from the left and appeared prominently in nationally-televised debates. But even with free publicity and hyperactive supporters, they jointly won less than 5 million votes from coast to coast.

Third, many of the new voters in 2004 were Republicans. Even though Kerry had the easy pickup of many of Nader's voters from 2000, Bush won almost as many new voters as Kerry did in Ohio, Minnesota, and Wisconsin, more new votes than Kerry in Virginia and Pennsylvania, half again as many as Kerry won in Florida, nearly twice as many as Kerry added in Missouri, and over three times as many as Kerry added in West Virginia. A large chunk of the formerly non-voting population turned out *not* to be natural leftists, after all.

In retrospect, none of this should have come as a surprise. It's true that in the past some voting procedures have clearly been designed to discourage people—and certain people more than others—from voting. But there was always something disturbing about the claim that even after the Voting Rights Act of 1965, registration procedures managed to deter tens of millions of Americans from voting. Piven and Cloward charged, "For the less well educated and the less confident, the application process can be humiliating" and too difficult to overcome. But in these same years, people with the same demographic characteristics successfully applied for credit, registered their children in school, secured mortgages, filed job applications, had cable TV installed, and bought cell phones and pagers, all of which require the same amount of effort, if not more. Claiming that these people could not handle the voter-registration process is simply extending the soft bigotry of low expectations to a new subject.

SO WHO ARE THE NON-VOTERS? MICHAEL McDonald and Samuel Popkin ("The Myth of the Vanishing Voter," *American Political Science Review*, December 2001), argue that their ranks are often overestimated, partly because of the growing number (since the 1970s) of resident aliens and felons not eligible to vote. Among those eligible, minorities and the poor have historically voted at lower rates than others. But it does not follow that the average non-voter is poor. If we accept McDonald and Popkin's point that turnout rates have held steady since 1972, Ruy Teixeira is still right to point out that, in the same timespan, Americans have become more educated and middle-class—so that the educationally and economically marginalized have been a declining, not a rising, share of non-voters, just as they have of the U.S. population. U.S. Census Bureau

data suggest that up to 30 million non-voters in 2000 had either some college education, a bachelor's degree, or an even more advanced degree, whereas around 16 million hadn't finished high school—about one-fifth of non-voters. Quite a few are young, and come from across the socioeconomic, educational, and subcultural spectrum.

In other words, non-voters include millions of middle-class Americans. This means that while non-voters don't faithfully replicate U.S. demography, they resemble voting Americans enough for us to conclude that a historic spike in turnout is unlikely to dramatically change the partisan balance in America. It's no coincidence that many organizations like the NAACP and Rock the Vote! claim to want to increase turnout across the board but in reality only target people likely to have a predictable partisan identity (African-Americans or socially liberal youngsters, for example). This means that the sword of Damocles has lifted from over conservatives' heads: non-voters are not a reserve army of hostile leftists, as progressives had hoped and some conservatives feared.

WHY, THEN, IS AMERICA'S TURNOUT so low in comparison to many European countries? The research remains inconclusive. Piven and Cloward reject the idea that American political culture is the culprit, since 19th-century turnout was high. But maybe that period, not ours, is the aberration. From the 1830s to the 1890s, U.S. politics was dominated by party machines that orchestrated election campaigns complete with pre-printed, party-line ballots. In time, these were joined by urban machines whose patronage networks specialized in hustling people into polling booths. Voters, far from simply delighting in civic engagement, were mobilized from above. Steven Rosenstone and John Mark Hansen (political scientists at the universities of Minnesota and Chicago, respectively) have concluded more broadly that mobilization from above, though far from the participatory ideal, "is an essential part of the story of why people participate in elections."

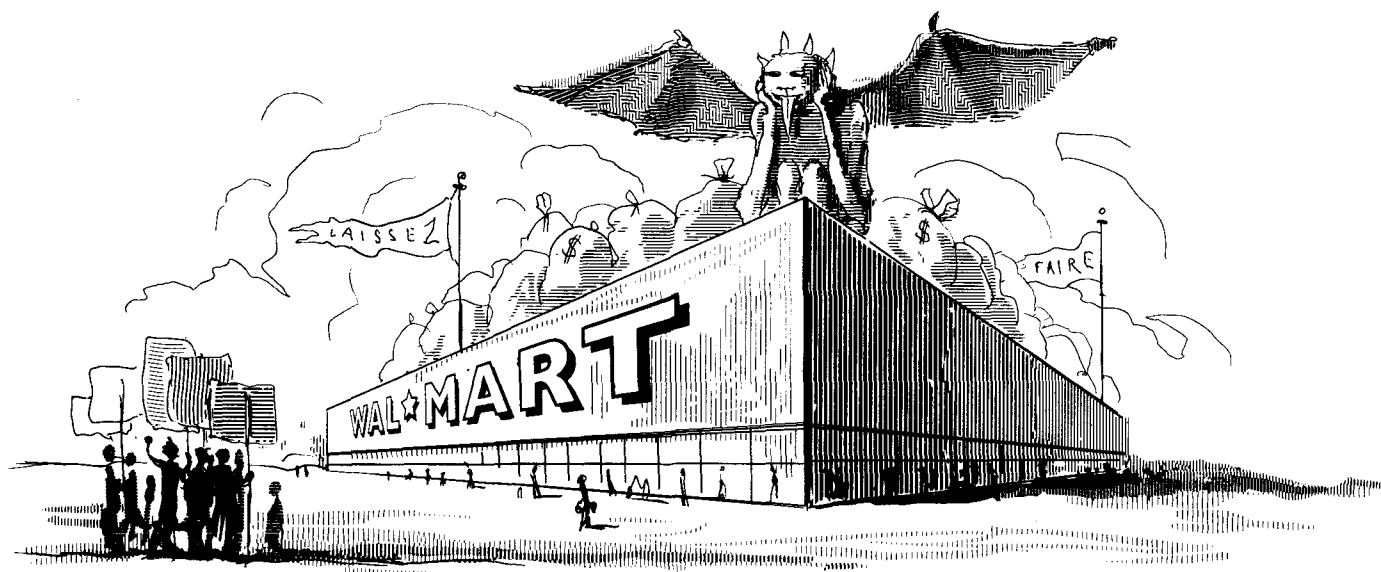
Not that there's anything wrong with that. It just shouldn't be passed off as evidence of a mass civic impulse. Do Americans require more encouragement than Europeans, or do our parties mobilize less effectively than theirs? Given the ways in which Americans differ from Europeans, neither thesis would be startling. What would be startling is that if this were the last we heard of the progressive electoral majority, lurking just off the ballot's edge.

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Book Review by R. Shep Melnick

FAT OF THE LAND

The New New Left: How American Politics Works Today, by Steven Malanga.
Ivan R. Dee, 157 pages, \$22.50



IF YOU LIKE WAL-MART, YOU MIGHT JUST love Steven Malanga's *The New New Left*. If political principle or social snobbery leads you to shun that cornucopia of consumer bargains, then you will probably put down this short, well-written book rather quickly. Its premise is that competitive markets, low taxes, and entrepreneurial spirit are far better at lifting people out of poverty than are government programs, however well intentioned. For Malanga, a senior fellow at the Manhattan Institute, Wal-Mart exemplifies the wonders of capitalism; and the Left's attack on it illustrates the cynicism of those who speak of social justice but deny the poor an opportunity to save money, find entry-level jobs, and revitalize their neighborhoods.

Malanga constructs a series of appealing stories around this central narrative line, but he is unlikely to convince those not already converted. He simply doesn't provide much evidence to support his premise, although he does offer some telling glimpses of the New York City Council's buffoonery, the modern university's intellectual corruption, organized interests' disturbing influence in politics, and the decline of local political parties.

Like most journalists, Malanga is inclined toward a Manichean view of the political world. Typically, journalists assume that greedy corporate executives are in cahoots with cynical politicians, and that brave correspondents must uncover the truth to protect the little guy. For

Malanga, however, power-hungry union leaders are in cahoots with cynical politicians, and brave correspondents must uncover the truth to protect taxpayers and business entrepreneurs. "Politics in America today," he holds, is a "faceoff" between taxpayers and "tax eaters." He warns that "the vast expansion of the public sector is finally reaching a tipping point, giving tax eaters the upper hand, especially in America's cities."

The most prominent element of the "tax eater" coalition—the one to which Malanga devotes most attention—is the government-employee union. Nearly as important but often overlooked by journalists and political scientists are the "social services groups created by the War on Poverty" with their ever-growing number of "quasi-public workers." He notes that health care jobs, for instance, have grown from less than 4% of the work force in 1965 to almost 10% today. Most of the funding comes from Medicare, Medicaid, and highly regulated insurance plans.

Malanga argues that the venal motives of public-employee union and social service group leaders are cleverly disguised by another member of the "new new left," political activists with cushy university jobs. He may exaggerate the influence of those individuals (one hesitates to call them academics) working in "labor studies" programs in public universities, yet the stories he tells show how deeply some institutions of higher learning have sunk into the swamp of unabashed partisanship.

AT A TIME WHEN WE ARE BOMBARDED with newspaper articles and expert analysis about the overwhelming power of conservatives, businessmen, and the Religious Right, it is useful to be reminded that the welfare state's supporters continue to wield substantial political clout. This helps explain why a quarter of a century after the Reagan Revolution, and a decade since the Gingrich Revolution, the public sector is bigger than ever. Although many beneficiaries of government programs are not organized, those who provide government services are. Not only do they vote, but they can help mobilize all those beneficiaries who would be threatened by retrenchment of the welfare state.

Occasionally, Malanga's description of the new New Left's power is marred by his astonishment that it at times employs the very tactics corporate executives use to slip loopholes into the tax code. For example, he decries the success of the Association of Community Organizers for Reform Now (ACORN) in putting a "living wage" question on the ballot in Detroit before the business community had understood its significance. This is clever politics, not dirty tricks. GM and Ford should have enough political smarts to cope with such things.

More telling is Malanga's point that the new New Left's influence has grown at the state and local level at the same time that it has declined at the national level. An odd but crucial feature of American government over the past 50 years



is that the number of federal civilian employees has remained constant despite the enormous expansion of the federal government's role. This is because most federal programs are carried out by state and local employees, whose numbers have grown by leaps and bounds since the 1960s. This peculiarity of our government bureaucracy reduces the power of public-employee unions at the national level, but magnifies it at the state and local level.

Malanga warns that the "tax eaters" will demand more and more of the golden goose known as the taxpayer, especially in cities like New York and San Francisco. Here it is useful to remember that anything that "can't go on like this forever" won't. From the perspective of a New York City resident (like Malanga), the gravest danger is that the new New Left will drive productive businesses (i.e., employers) out of the Big Apple. But this exit option, a vital part of our federal system, is precisely what puts the brakes on the expansion of state and local governments. Federalism both creates pockets of political support for big government, and limits the ability of these regions to finance their projects.

ONE OF THE BEST CHAPTERS IN THE book is Malanga's critique of Richard Florida's popular book, *The Rise of the Creative Class* (2002). Florida argued that cities prosper not by keeping their tax rates low to please business leaders, but by investing in amenities (theaters, bike trails, extensive so-

cial services) and by encouraging social tolerance and diversity to attract a highly educated workforce. According to Malanga, this political "equivalent of an eat-all-you-want-and-still-lose-weight diet" offered the new New Left a "way to talk economic-development talk while walking the familiar big-spending walk." He shows that during the 1990s "creative" cities like New York, San Francisco, Austin, and San Diego barely managed to keep up with the national average in job creation—despite the fact that they were among the major beneficiaries of the high-tech bubble. Once the bubble burst, Richard Florida's supposed "talent magnets" began to lose not just jobs, but population.

The idea that public projects such as highways, schools, and even museums attract employers and highly trained employees is hardly a crazy one. One of federalism's greatest advantages is that states and cities can offer a variety of services and tax packages. They can experiment; they can find a mix that reflects voters' preferences. (Malanga reports that the capital of Texas adopted the economic development theme "Keep Austin Weird.") Competitive federalism will not work, though, if the competing units can persuade higher levels of government to subsidize their endeavors. Not only does this hide the cost of providing public services, but it leads everyone else to demand the same subsidy—lest citizens get stuck paying the bill without receiving anything in return.

Competitive pressures—often misleadingly called the "race to the bottom"—place

severe limits on the new New Left's influence. That is why the coalition described by Malanga searches so assiduously for ways to export the costs of its initiatives. He notes that New York City's "living wage" ordinance "zeroed in on health-care workers because many of them worked in state-funded programs." Similarly, Detroit's living wage law applied to "contracts that the city simply administered but that were paid for by federal agencies." The new New Left's adversaries at the state and national level have an opportunity to thwart these efforts—provided they understand what is at stake.

One local issue surprisingly absent from Malanga's story is education, which is in many respects the preeminent civil rights issue of our time. This may be the policy area in which government-employee unions are strongest—and the divergence between the interests of the unions and disadvantaged residents of large cities most substantial. Many cities clearly are doing a terrible job of educating poor minority children. All too often teachers' unions have stood in the way of experimentation and reform. The Manhattan Institute has played a prominent role in calling attention to this problem and identifying unorthodox solutions. Given Malanga's journalistic talents and knowledge of New York politics, this would be an apt topic for his next exposé.

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THE NEW FREEDOM

Woodrow Wilson and the Roots of Modern Liberalism, by Ronald J. Pestritto.
Rowman & Littlefield, 296 pages, \$85 (cloth), \$29.95 (paper)

Woodrow Wilson: The Essential Political Writings, edited by Ronald J. Pestritto.
Lexington Books, 268 pages, \$70 (cloth), \$24.95 (paper)



THREE MONTHS BEFORE THE 1912 ELECTION, Theodore Roosevelt wrote a letter to Horace Plunkett in which he vehemently contradicted the opinion that there was no real difference between him and Woodrow Wilson. As T.R. saw it, Wilson, for most of his life a professor and college president, stood for the "outworn doctrines" that had caused most of the country's political woes. Only when he ran for Governor of New Jersey two years earlier had Wilson recognized the bankruptcy of his previous positions and "instantly turned an absolute somersault." And on many Progressive issues, Wilson remained wrongheaded.

If Roosevelt had studied Wilson's academic career as closely as Ronald J. Pestritto has, he would never have made those assertions. The great merit of Pestritto's *Woodrow Wilson and the Roots of Modern Liberalism*, and the companion volume of Wilson's *Essential Political Writings*, is that they show that Wilson was steeped in the writings of the English and German Historical Schools as well as Hegelian historicism from his earliest graduate school days. Indeed, one of the major conclusions of Pestritto's probing study is that Wilson was, at least in theory, a thoroughgoing Progressive long before T.R. was. If Wilson appeared the more conservative in 1912, it was merely a triangulating tactic designed to win the election by positioning Wilson to T.R.'s right and to William Howard Taft's left. Thus, it is not surprising that Wilson adopted many Progressive measures after he became president. His was not a late-life con-

version to the Progressive creed or—as Eldon Eisenach argues in his otherwise fine study of the Progressives—a betrayal of their cause.

Roosevelt bailed out of law school after one year and threw himself into practical politics, thus minimizing his exposure to the latest German thinking (though he did take at least one course at Columbia Law with the Hegel-infatuated John W. Burgess). Wilson obtained a law degree from the University of Virginia and a Ph.D. from the newly established Johns Hopkins University. As Pestritto notes, Hopkins was one of the first Ph.D.-granting institutions in America, and most of its faculty had earned their advanced degrees at European universities. At Hopkins, Wilson studied with two men who would later become leading Progressive intellectuals: the economist Richard T. Ely and the historian Herbert Baxter Adams. Both Ely and Adams had studied at Heidelberg under Johann K. Bluntschli, a prominent Hegelian, and were trained in the tradition of German state theory and the philosophy of history. It was Adams who first introduced Wilson to the comparative-historical study of politics, which sought to bridge national differences and promote the adoption of forward-looking foreign institutions, a method Wilson later employed in his own academic studies.

PESTRITTO IS PARTICULARLY GOOD AT tracing Wilson's intellectual development. He begins by distinguishing between the English (and German) Historical

Schools and Hegelian historicism. The English Historical School began with Edmund Burke, who, responding in horror to the French Revolution, criticized natural rights and social compact theory as too abstract and politically dangerous. By the middle of the 19th century, members of the English Historical School, e.g., Herbert Spencer and Walter Bagehot, fell under the sway of evolutionary biology. Wilson was especially taken with Bagehot's description of the English constitution as a series of adaptations to changing circumstances. But there was one way in which the Historical School fell short: while celebrating the evolutionary progress that had already taken place, it declined to predict the future.

By contrast, the philosophy of history developed by Hegel confidently looked forward to an end state that moved beyond classical liberal political philosophy. In the *Philosophy of Right*, Hegel rejected the theory of the social compact, arguing that states developed only gradually, and not by deliberate creation. He further rejected the idea that there could be natural rights that transcended a particular historical setting or that the subjective claims of the individual should take precedence over the common good. Because the state is the objective embodiment of the people's will, and necessary for their ethical development, there could be no limits on its power. Thus mechanisms such as the separation of powers, which tended to restrain government, were misguided. Instead, Hegel placed his faith in supposedly impartial bureaucrats who, because they held lifetime

tenure and were chosen by competitive examinations, would possess the independence and intellectual tools needed to discern the people's objective will.

Wilson was clearly indebted to the English Historical School, especially in his view of the American Revolution not as a radical departure from the political principles of the mother country, but as an outgrowth (in some ways an inferior outgrowth) of the English constitutional tradition. Wilson preferred the unwritten constitution of England to the written constitution adopted by the Americans because he thought the latter tended to reinforce the idea of a founding moment that had to be revered—a view that made it more difficult to propose gradual evolutionary changes. Yet despite his affinities with the English Historical School, Wilson was at bottom an idealist, argues Pestritto, who followed Hegel and Bluntschi in believing progress was toward a particular end state. Wilson could justify the radical changes he proposed, so long as they came about through gradual means, because he believed that Providence and history were leading America to this goal.

WILSON SET FORTH HIS THEORY OF government in numerous academic writings (compiled by Pestritto in his companion volume), in which his debt to foreign thinkers is clearly evident, not only in his use of sources but in the arguments themselves. Pestritto's discussion of these philosophical themes is lucid and helpful. Here one finds traces of both Hegel and the social Darwinism that suffused so many of the writings of that period. Wilson accepts the Hegelian notion that progress occurs through struggle and conflict, and shifts seamlessly into a social Darwinian discourse about superior races. (Although Pestritto rejects the usual interpretation that Wilson was "merely" a Southern racist, preferring to attribute his racism to more heady sources, it is not clear why Wilson's prejudice against blacks must be an either/or matter.)

Again following Hegel, Wilson rejected social compact theory as too abstract, despite the evidence that this was *in fact* how the American republic was established (and, we can add, the prevailing model of what constitutes legitimacy in today's world). Nor did he show any sympathy for the idea that the so-called state of nature reflects an insight about the moral primacy of the individual or the legitimate purposes of government. For Wilson, it was not the rights-bearing individual who matters but the society as a whole. Accordingly, he rejected the founders' idea that free government must seek to enlist the interests and passions, as well

as the opinions, of each individual. For Wilson, the appeal to self-interest clearly marked a more primitive era, which history had left behind. Disinterestedness, directed toward the common good, was now the higher moral calling, and individual rights should no longer be permitted to serve as a barrier to the achievement of the ethical state. This was true especially for property rights, which Wilson regarded as historically contingent. He dismissed the founders' claim that in a popular government, majority tyranny remains a permanent danger. History, acting through the great cataclysm of the Civil War, had brought forth a single nation out of a divided confederation and united it in one will. (Pestritto shrewdly wonders why two parties should remain if there is one will.) In Wilson's reading, the Civil War did not vindicate the principles of the founding but moved decisively beyond them, to attain a higher unity of will.

The job of the political leader, assisted by a disinterested bureaucracy, was to discern this will and move the people to accept it. In this task, rhetoric is crucial, and Pestritto follows the work of Jeffrey Tulis, James Ceaser, et al., in underlining Wilson's role in forging the modern "rhetorical presidency." Combining the extra-constitutional roles of party manager and director of public opinion, the "leader" (one of Wilson's most important essays, included in *Essential Political Writings*, is "Leaders of Men") appeals directly to the people through visionary speeches, rather than working with the coordinate branches of government as set forth in the Constitution. Here too Wilson dismissed the founders' fears that a skillful demagogue might inflame the people's passions, inciting them to tyrannize over the minority for his own selfish ends. History had rendered majority tyranny obsolete and ushered in the new post-constitutional administrative state. The historical-comparative method of the new political science could do much to assist progressive leaders who sought to apply the innovations of more advanced European states to post-Civil War America (even if their constitutional principles were different), and Wilson, as president of the newly formed American Political Science Association, heartily endorsed this project.

IN TRUE HEGELIAN FASHION, WILSON DIVIDED American history into separate epochs, each of which marked an advance upon the previous era. He regarded Madison and Hamilton as essentially British (though they failed to recognize that the British constitution was evolving, and clung instead to permanent principles). More surprisingly, in his essay "A

Calendar of Great Americans" Wilson declared Jefferson "not a thorough American because of the strain of French philosophy that permeated and weakened all his thought." Overall, Wilson adopted the moderate Progressive line that the founders were good for their time, but that their primitive individualism was now completely outdated. A decidedly odd Democrat, he criticized Andrew Jackson (as he had Jefferson) for supporting decentralization and strict construction. Moreover, he blamed Jackson for having introduced the spoils system, which rewarded cronies and allowed "special interests" to corrupt politics. Wilson judged the Civil War to be necessary in a world-historical sense, because it brought about national unity. In his reading, Reconstruction (once the North removed federal troops from the South and allowed the superior white race to regain control) moved America forward, beyond narrow constitutionalism, toward a growing realization that mere forms and formalities should not impede the will of the nation.

In his academic writings, Wilson toyed with several ways to bring about desired evolutionary changes. His best-known early effort appeared in his 1885 study, *Congressional Government*. The gist of his argument was that Congress could not govern effectively though the secretive committee system and should instead transfer power to a Cabinet drawn from the majority party in Congress, even if it was different from that of the president. Thus the cabinet would become the real center of power, with each cabinet officer assuming responsibility for the development of policy in his particular area, while the presidency shrank to little more than a non-partisan figurehead. Wilson's goal was to nudge America toward the British model of parliamentary democracy, which he regarded as superior because it separated politics (or deliberation) from administration (or actual policy-making). The scheme was still-born, however, because it ran afoul of Article I, section 6, clause 2 of the Constitution, which barred members of one branch from holding office in another.

UNDAUNTED, WILSON PURSUED HIS goal of overcoming the separation of powers by another route. Inspired by the second Grover Cleveland Administration, the growing importance of foreign policy after the Spanish-American War, and T.R.'s energetic presidency, Wilson turned to the presidency as the new engine of progress. As Wilson explained in his 1908 study of the executive, it was the president's power as molder of public opinion and party leader—not his powers and duties outlined in the Constitution—that pro-



vided the means for him to become an effective instrument of change.

Pestritto's chapter on "The Science of Administration" is essential to understanding Wilson's overall goal of replacing the constitutional principle of separation of powers with the separation of politics and administration. Whereas the separation of powers tended to erect barriers to government action, the separation of politics from administration has the opposite effect, and with good reason. Since (in theory) government now acts on behalf of the united will of the people, there should be no limits on its power. The task of politics, and of the leader especially, is to help shape the public opinion that steers the government. But public opinion should not influence actual policy-making, which is to be carried out by an impartial bureaucracy, obtained by civil service reform and insulated from day-to-day political pressures. Within the administrative agencies, the separation of powers mandated by the Constitution effectively dissolves, as these agencies make, execute, and judge the policies that reflect the

people's objective will. Pestritto rightly wonders how this state of affairs can be reconciled with the Constitution or with a democratic republic, inasmuch as the bureaucrats who make public policy are, by design, unaccountable to the public. Although he gives a fair hearing to Herbert Storing, the most thoughtful defender of the modern administrative state, he remains unpersuaded that Wilson's progressive project can be reconciled with the intentions of the framers and the requirements of republican self-government.

HAVING DEMOLISHED THE POSITION that Woodrow Wilson was a late-comer to the Progressive program, one wishes that Pestritto had extended his analysis to the presidential years to see how Wilson's academic theories fared when confronted with political reality. Although the book touches briefly on the 1912 election and beyond in a concluding chapter, this question goes largely unexplored. Finally, one wishes that Pestritto had given his political imagina-

tion a bit more scope and had tried to envision what solutions to the novel problems of industrialization, urbanization, and mass immigration, as well as the old problems of racial injustice and growing economic inequality, the founders might have devised. Majority faction remains a permanent danger in a democratic republic, especially when the impediments to demagoguery are removed by the rhetorical presidency. But that does not mean that minority factions, especially wealthy or influential minorities, wielding power beyond their numbers, cannot also threaten the founders' achievement. Still, in the task he has set himself, Pestritto has succeeded splendidly and should be congratulated for uncovering the harm that "mere" academics can do.

Jean M. Yarbrough is Gary M. Penty, Sr., Professor of Social Sciences at Bowdoin College, author of *American Virtues: Thomas Jefferson on the Character of a Free People* (University Press of Kansas), and editor of the forthcoming *The Essential Jefferson* (Hackett Press).

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AMERICAN IDOL

WHILE SERVING AS AN AMBASSADOR in Paris during the American Revolution, Benjamin Franklin made a point of wearing the simple dress and hairdo of the American "natural," much to the delight of French intellectuals and politicians. In 1779, he wrote to his daughter that her father's face had become as well known in France as the man in the moon, so common were the medallions, pictures, and prints of it sold to an admiring public. It's fair to say that with the Franklin Tercentenary approaching on January 17, Americans are almost as fascinated by Franklin as the French were—and, one might add, just as blind to Franklin's conscious manipulation of his own persona.

Franklin was a self-made man in the real sense that he rose from obscurity to prominence. Born the youngest son of a Boston tallowmaker, he was apprenticed to his older brother James, a printer. Chafing under James's harsh control, at age 17 he ran away nearly penniless to Philadelphia. There Franklin thrived as a printer, editor, and merchant, launching several newspapers and penning the famous aphorisms of *Poor Richard's Almanac*. He retired comfortably at 42 to devote himself to his interests in science, invention, and public service: experimenting with electricity, crafting bifocals and the Franklin stove, and founding the first public library, volunteer fire brigade, and other civic endeavors. A loyal British subject, Franklin was slow to enlist in the Revolutionary cause, but by 1776, he had committed himself fully to American independence. Internationally renowned, he served abroad as a diplomat, returning home to lend his reputation and political acumen to the crafting of the new U.S. Constitution. He died shortly afterwards, in 1790, at age 84.

The Model American

BUT FRANKLIN WAS ALSO SELF-MADE in the sense that he fashioned himself into an American icon to be loved (or loathed) by generations to come. He painted the icon in his posthumous *Autobiography*, which became one of the most read books in America. In it we see Franklin's rise from poverty and anonymity to money and fame. But it's also a story of moral as well as material redemption. Franklin describes himself as a precocious genius whose reading of modern books caused him to fall from his father's morality

and religion; he became a hot-headed smart aleck and an all-too-freethinking delinquent. After reflecting on the harms he inflicted on, and suffered from, those close to him, Franklin gave himself a spiritual second chance, came back to God, and departed on his famous project to achieve moral perfection. His aim was to get control of himself in order to serve God by serving his fellow human beings. This was his object lesson for all Americans. Franklin depicts himself in the *Autobiography* as a morally committed political man (his feats of natural science are almost invisible), who rationally

materialistic and acquisitive society. Whatever people think about America, they take it out on Benjamin Franklin.

One thing is for sure: he made no bones about presenting himself as the quintessential American and moral hero. When he began Part Two of the *Autobiography* in 1784, Franklin explained his renewed efforts by reprinting two absurdly bombastic letters from friends Abel James and Benjamin Vaughn. Aside from comparing Franklin's story favorably to all of Plutarch's *Lives* combined, and claiming that its example of self-education, wisdom, and prudence would influence millions, James says he knows of "no character living nor many of them put together, who has so much in his power as thyself to promote a greater spirit of industry and early attention to business, frugality, and temperance with the American youth." Vaughn adds: "All that has happened to you is also connected with the detail of the manners and situation of a rising people; and in this respect I do not think that the writings of Caesar and Tacitus can be more interesting to a true judge of human nature and society."

In three sparkling biographies, Edmund Morgan, Walter Isaacson, and Gordon Wood tell the Franklin story. They very much like their man—like him so much that Adams might say they've been too easily charmed by the atheistic "old conjurer." I think in the end that they have been, although all three bring the mythical Franklin down a peg or two, in order to humanize him and make him a man we can realistically admire. The Franklin of these books is by no means the completely cool and self-controlled political character described in the *Autobiography*. Each volume describes him as temporarily blinded—whether by resentment and anger, imperialistic ambition, or elitist isolation—to political realities that would otherwise have been easy to see. Nor was he the egalitarian portrayed in the *Autobiography*: Franklin worked as a printer until he could retire and take up gentlemanly pursuits. He became the folk hero of the middling sorts only in the hagiography that began after his death.

Warts and All

BOTH MORGAN, YALE UNIVERSITY'S Sterling Professor of History Emeritus, and Isaacson, the president of the Aspen Institute and former chairman of CNN, think that Franklin lost his head in the elaborate

Books discussed in this essay:

Benjamin Franklin,
by Edmund S. Morgan.
Yale University Press, 352 pages,
\$28 (cloth), \$16 (paper)

Benjamin Franklin: An American Life,
by Walter Isaacson.
Simon & Schuster, 608 pages,
\$30 (cloth), \$16 (paper)

The Americanization of Benjamin Franklin,
by Gordon S. Wood.
Penguin Press, 320 pages,
\$25.95 (cloth), \$16 (paper)

*Runaway America: Benjamin Franklin,
Slavery, and the American Revolution*,
by David Waldstreicher. Hill & Wang,
336 pages, \$25 (cloth), \$15 (paper)

and pragmatically balances all sides of every issue, never loses his cool, and cares always for the common good.

In his own lifetime, there were more than a few respectable men (John Adams for one) who thought Franklin a self-aggrandizing phony, but over time his self-portrait as the self-made man has been revered by American entrepreneurs and schoolmarm—and reviled by the 19th-century Transcendentalists, D.H. Lawrence, and all who despise the bourgeoisie. The former loved Franklin as the model democratic American who with moral discipline and endless hard work comes from nowhere to get ahead and serve his fellow man; the latter hated him as the model Chamber-of-Commerce prig—a materialistic and acquisitive man representing a

scheme to bring the independently chartered Pennsylvania colony under royal rule, a design Franklin pursued doggedly after 1757 when he left for London as the Pennsylvania Assembly's agent. From the mid-1740s through the French and Indian War, Pennsylvania politics revolved around the funding of defense. The Proprietor, Thomas Penn, and his party of wealthy merchants and Anglicans refused to have proprietary lands taxed. The Quaker party, which dominated the Assembly, opposed the Proprietary party but was reluctant, on principle, to spend for defense. Franklin worried about Pennsylvania's safety from the dangers of Spain and France and, moved by a growing enthusiasm for the British empire, lobbied for more spending and focus on defense. In the course of his efforts, he concluded that both parties were irresponsible and that the only solution was to oust the Proprietors and replace them with direct rule by the Crown.

Franklin developed so profound a dislike for Penn, his supercilious intellectual inferior, that the resulting enmity caused him to misjudge opinion on both sides of the Atlantic—in his own Quaker party in Pennsylvania as well as in the Ministry in London. The same passion led him to bungle the election of 1764, in which he lost his Assembly seat to a candidate backed by a loose alliance of Germans, whom Franklin had insulted as "Palatine Boors"; western-dwelling Scotch and Irish Presbyterians; the Proprietary party; and even some of his own Quaker party compatriots, especially John Dickinson, who worried that much of the proprietary baby (religious liberty and the Assembly's relative independence) might get thrown out with the bath. Since his Quaker party still controlled the Assembly, Franklin was immediately rehired as agent and continued to pursue the royal government scheme, which despite his misguided efforts never bore fruit.

Gordon Wood, a distinguished professor of history at Brown University, doesn't agree with this take on Franklin's unruly side. He argues instead that the scheme, while ultimately a fiasco, was in perfect accord with Franklin's passionate imperialism and monarchism. As the colonial crisis that would become the American Revolution mounted, Franklin articulated an increasingly Tory-like theory of the empire, according to which the King but not Parliament had authority to deal with the colonies. The design to replace proprietary rule failed not because Franklin was blinded by hatred of Penn, argues Wood, but because Franklin was unable to win over Lord Hillsborough, Secretary of the America Department and a hard-liner on colonial affairs. Even so, Franklin's hopes for the empire were rekindled in 1772 when, due

to the American's own machinations, Hillsborough was ousted and replaced by the more agreeable Lord Dartmouth.

These hopes were finally dashed for good by Franklin's colossal blunder in the "Hutchinson Affair," in which he tried to blame British hostility to America not on the Ministry's and Parliament's mistakes but on the treachery of Governor Thomas Hutchinson of Massachusetts. Hutchinson had called for harsh measures against the Americans in private correspondence to the Ministry. Franklin obtained these letters and then leaked them to an outraged American public. As Wood says, the gambit was a "spectacular miscalculation" that stirred up the Massachusetts radicals at home and led to Franklin's public humiliation on the floor of Parliament, earning him a reputation in England as the deceitful *éminence grise* behind America's insolence and rebellion.

Morgan, Isaacson, and Wood agree that Franklin's elitism, which led him to believe that a few reasonable men could solve any political problem, was another source of his occasional political blindness. This was especially apparent in the Hutchinson Affair, and also in Franklin's misjudgment of colonial opinions and passions during the Stamp Act crisis. His own conciliatory steps in managing that crisis

persuaded some in America that he was behind it all in the first place.

When it finally became clear that his efforts at reconciliation could not prevent the inevitable, Franklin threw in his lot on the side of full-blown American independence. (Hence the title of Wood's book, *The Americanization of Benjamin Franklin*.) But this was no mere change of plans, according to Wood. Angry at the empire that had let him down and humiliated him, Franklin transferred his affections personally and fervently to the revolutionary cause.

In serving that cause, Franklin found himself in the right circumstances to pull off his most stunning and important achievement: the diplomatic effort that won French support for the Revolution and, years later, acceptable terms for the peace with Britain. All three biographies provide delightful, page-turning accounts of the near-miracle wrought by Franklin in Paris, surrounded by the jealous, meddling and Francophobic Adams, the paranoid Arthur Lee, the sinister hanger-on Ralph Izard, and the bungling John Laurens. Here we see Franklin most in control of his wits, and able, despite the rigors of his assignment, to have the time of his life with his printing, chess, writing, and other *divertissements*—most notoriously, Madame Helvétius and the ladies of Paris.

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THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY

Part One

by Benjamin Franklin

WHILE I WAS INTENT ON improving my Language, I met with an English Grammar (I think it was Greenwood's), at the End of which there were two little Sketches of the Arts of Rhetoric and Logic, the latter finishing with a Specimen of a Dispute in the Socratic Method. And soon after I procur'd Xenophon's Memorable Things of Socrates, wherein there are many instances of the same Method. I was charm'd with it, adopted it, dropt my abrupt Contradiction, and positive Argumentation, and put on the humble Enquirer & Doubter. And being then, from reading Shaftsbury & Collins, become a real Doubter in many Points of our Religious Doctrine, I found this Method safest for my self & very embarrassing to those against whom I used it, therefore I took a Delight in it, practis'd it continually & grew very artful & expert in drawing People even of superior Knowledge into Concessions the Consequences of which they did not foresee, entangling them in Difficulties out of which they could not extricate themselves, and so obtaining Victories that neither my self nor my Cause always deserved. —I continu'd this Method some few Years, but gradually left it, retaining only the Habit of expressing my self in Terms of modest Diffidence, never using when I advance any thing that may possibly be disputed, the words *Certainly, undoubtedly, or any others that give the Air of Positiveness to an Opinion; but rather say, I conceive or I apprehend a thing to be so or so, It appears to me, or I should think it so or so for such & such Reasons, or I imagine it to be so, or it is so if I am not mistaken.* —This Habit I believe has been of great Advantage to me when I have had occasion to inculcate my Opinions & persuade Men into Measures that I have been from time to time engag'd in promoting. —And as the chief Ends of Conversation are to *inform, or to be informed, to please or to persuade,* I wish well meaning sensible Men would

Sins of the Past

FRANKLIN'S POLITICAL CAREER WAS LONG and varied, and he made enemies strong enough to ensure that his death was greeted in America with surprisingly lukewarm commemorations. In France, Wood recounts, the French National Assembly declared three days of national mourning and "*philosophes delivered eulogy after eulogy.*" By contrast, Vice President Adams, seething with resentment at the man he thought had hogged the Revolution's glory, teamed up with Richard Henry Lee, Ralph Izard, and others in the Senate who, thinking Franklin too radically French, worked to have a proposal for a formal tribute withdrawn before it came to a vote. The American Philosophical Society, which Franklin had co-founded, delayed its public tribute for a year. Even then the speech, delivered by one of his long-time enemies, was flabby and backhandedly insulting.

In Wood's account of Franklin's sad end, there isn't a word about another reason that many in the Senate were in no mood to eulogize him. In the negotiations over the Constitutional Convention's infamous three-fifths compromise on representation and taxation, hammered out in Franklin's house, Franklin had kept his views on slavery quiet and even dissuaded the Pennsylvania Abolition Society (of which he was president) from presenting to the Convention a petition against the slave trade. After brokering this bargain with the devil, Franklin lent his name in 1790 to a much more radical petition to Congress opposing not merely the slave trade but slavery as such. The petition failed, of course, but in the debates Southerners vilified Franklin as a hypocrite: the old goat had turned his back on the compromise he had worked so hard to forge.

Wood describes the petition to Congress as a final chance for Franklin, no longer the "pragmatic tactful conciliator," to be his antislavery self, to poke his finger in the eyes of Southern senators. But in his wonderful book, *Runaway America*, David Waldstreicher points out the irony not mentioned by Wood: that Franklin had for a long time profited from, temporized with, and apologized for slavery. How do we reconcile Franklin, and hence America, with our original sin?

A professor of history at Temple University, Waldstreicher shows that Franklin's life and career as the "First American" were bound up with the institution of slavery from beginning to end. *Runaway America* meticulously traces Franklin's own experience as a runaway from an indentured apprenticeship; his later economic dependence on slavery and indentured labor; his slowly changing opinions about the

peculiar institution; and his propagandistic deflections of the British taunt that the colonists demanded liberties and rights for themselves while denying them to their slaves. By the early 1760s he had concluded that slavery was bad, but even so, he blamed the evil on the British—as did Jefferson's draft of the Declaration of Independence—as though the Americans were guiltless. When Franklin condemned slavery, avers Waldstreicher, it was for the sake of propagating a self-protective "antislavery American identity that excluded slaves." And indeed, the *Autobiography*, so central to the Franklin myth, depicts an America of liberty, opportunity, and hard work, without a hint of those who worked hard because they had no liberty at all.

It's no stretch for Waldstreicher to say that Franklin's antislavery reputation was mostly the result of antislavery activists' enlisting his name because they knew that he could not object. Franklin, who always thought liberty a very good thing, came eventually to think slavery a very bad thing for all concerned—slaves, masters, America, the exciting new world promised by science and technology. But one cannot read Franklin, even in his very last writings, without sensing on his part a cool reserve about the matter. Although he thought slavery to be a very bad thing—so bad that he described it to Congress as "an abomination of human nature"—the consummate pragmatist still thought it proper to temporize with the beast.

Waldstreicher tries a bit too hard and on too little evidence, for my taste, to ascribe racist impulses and motives to Franklin. Yet by contemporary standards—especially in a volume on Franklin and slavery—these imputations are impressively few. Franklin tried to expunge the stain of slavery, both for America and for his alter ego in the *Autobiography*. In my view, Franklin believed slavery was on its way out and at the end of his life he tried to give it a shove. But apparently he thought that both America and the model American would be better off not dwelling on it—as if slavery were a mistake to be regretted and corrected and gotten over, not a sin to be atoned. Atoning for sin, thought Franklin, almost always causes more trouble than it's worth.

The Real Ben Franklin

BY DISPLAYING FRANKLIN, WARTS AND all, Morgan, Isaacson, and Wood aim to replace the cartoon-like Franklin myths with a real, human hero of liberty and moral and material progress. They boost the heroic Franklin by bringing him down to earth, and they present realistic celebrations of America as the beacon of liberty and progress. We Americans are no angels, but with Franklin as

model we try hard to be on the angels' side. In the end, despite showing us a Franklin who could be bettered by his passions, these authors agree with the *Autobiography's* picture of a genius who, after weathering a spiritual crisis brought on by his rash skepticism, subordinated his gifts, especially his love of natural philosophy, to public service as the greatest service to God.

But there are plenty of reasons—the hilariously hyperbolic letters of James and Vaughn, for example—to take the *Autobiography* with a large grain of salt. According to the book's first part, as a young man Franklin lost his faith in divine, particular providence—as evidenced in his metaphysical pamphlet *A Dissertation on Liberty and Necessity, Pleasure and Pain*, written and published in London in 1725 when he was not yet 20. Franklin soon burned this pamphlet, which denied free will and the existence of virtue and vice, because of its potential “ill tendency.” Reflecting on his corruption, Franklin had the moral epiphany that led him back to the straight and narrow and, also, to belief in particular providence. But in Part Two of the *Autobiography*, written a decade later and at some textual distance from the account of his London escapades, Franklin tells us almost offhandedly that, regarding his religious beliefs, he “never doubted” God's government of the world by “his Providence,” nor that “all crime will be punished and virtue rewarded either here or hereafter.”

This contradiction simply cannot be dismissed as an error on Franklin's part. No normal human being, and certainly not a man like Franklin, could forget so important a spiritual event as having lost and then regained his faith. The contradiction makes the whole story of fall and redemption, one way or another, dubious. In my view, a careful reading of the ironic *Autobiography* discloses the following: the Hero of Public Service is a myth; Franklin rather did what Franklin liked to do; and he was a serious thinker who, though he wore a leather apron, philosophized not with a hammer but with a joke.

About the most important subjects, Franklin wrote so as to please and instruct those who were firmly attached to conventional views and who might get mad or be corrupted when those views were challenged. To these readers he wrote in order to elevate or moderate, but within the horizon of their conventional views. Then, with his artful bag of rhetorical tricks, he wrote *at the same time* to those readers with whom he could be frank, who could profit from his much more radical questioning by testing, on their own, the consistency of their commonsense and cherished moral intuitions, opinions, and beliefs. Adams and others noted Franklin's ironic verbal conjuring—and they were right.

Despite its cheery tone and comic defense of useful moral virtue and practical piety, the *Autobiography* shows that Franklin did experience a per-

sonal crisis of faith that set him on the path of thinking. At the end of that path, however, he concluded that our commonsensical concepts of morality—justice, free will, merit and demerit, devotion, virtue and vice, the noble, evil, reward and punishment—make no logical sense, despite the fact that they seem so obvious.

How then to account for Franklin's apparent dedication to public service? My own view is that Franklin was above all else a political elitist and fixer, and something of a cool opportunist—more akin to a big-city boss than to an ideological partisan. For Franklin, the purpose of government is simply, and only, to provide the conditions for individual liberty and happiness—however we might see that happiness—and for such security and prosperity as is possible.

Political ambition almost always reflects the love of justice, and as such is never far removed from anger and indignation. For politically ambitious men there is a limit to permissible raillery; there are some things that cannot be mocked. Careful reading of Franklin's humor, by contrast, reveals that nothing is spared: religion, divine providence, the life of Jesus, Enlightenment rationalism, the great chain of being, philanthropy, the family, sex and love, moral virtue, human and divine justice, our political attachments and obligations, natural rights, Newton's laws, Baconian science, even the Masons, and, above all, the American Revolution.

Franklin did not believe in natural rights, and that's why, although he thought slavery was very bad and hoped to see it gone, he was nevertheless so cool about the matter. Franklin liked politics because it was for him a challenging and delightful aspect of invention and production (little different from his experiments in natural philosophy and technological innovations). It was a part of the grand game of modernity, which promised, above all, new and hitherto unimagined possibilities for human life. But for all his well-deserved reputation as a friend of progress, the philosophical Franklin understood the deep roots of human folly, the limits of enlightenment, the dangers of moral indignation, and the simple fact that life is tough and often deals us cards we don't like and can't do much to change.

Jerry Weinberger is professor of political science at Michigan State University, where he is director of the LeFrak Forum and co-director of the Symposium on Science, Reason, and Modern Democracy. He is the author most recently of *Benjamin Franklin Unmasked: On the Unity of His Moral, Religious, and Political Thought* (University Press of Kansas).

not lessen their Power of doing Good by a Positive assuming Manner that seldom fails to disgust, tends to create Opposition, and to defeat every one of those Purposes for which speech was given to us, to wit, giving or receiving Information, or Pleasure: For If you would *inform*, a positive dogmatical Manner in advancing your Sentiments, may provoke Contradiction & prevent a candid Attention. If you wish Information & Improvement from the Knowledge of others and yet at the same time express your self as firmly fix'd in your present Opinions, modest sensible Men, who do not love Disputation, will probably leave you undisturb'd in the Possession of your Error; and by such a Manner you can seldom hope to recommend your self in *pleasing* your Hearers, or to persuade those whose Concurrence you desire. —Pope says, judiciously,

*Men should be taught as if you
taught them not,
And things unknown propos'd as
things forgot,—*

further recommending it to us,

*To speak tho' sure, with seeming
Diffidence.*

And he might have coupl'd with this Line that which he has coupled with another, I think less properly,

*For want of Modesty is want of
Sense.*

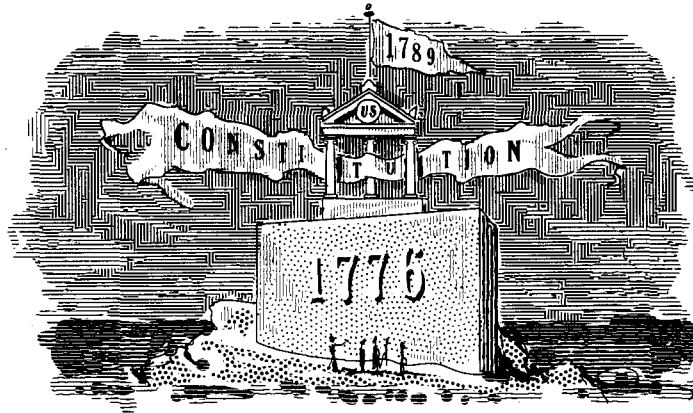
If you ask why less properly, I must repeat the Lines;

*“Immodest Words admit of no
Defence;
“For Want of Modesty is Want
of Sense.”*

Now is not *Want of Sense*, (where a Man is so unfortunate as to want it) some Apology for his *Want of Modesty*? and would not the Lines stand more justly thus?

*Immodest Words admit but this
Defence,
That Want of Modesty is Want
of Sense.*

This however I should submit to better Judgments.—



Original Intent and the American Soul

by Harry V. Jaffa

WHILE QUIBBLING OVER HARRIET Miers's ill-fated nomination to the Supreme Court, conservatives overlooked the more serious flaw in President Bush's claim that he would appoint justices to the Court in the mold of Antonin Scalia and Clarence Thomas. Although Scalia and Thomas may both be regarded as conservative "originalist" judges, their views of the Constitution are fundamentally different. Positivists like Justice Scalia who look only to the "text and tradition" of the Constitution, but not to its moral principles, are ultimately no match for the liberal critics of original intent jurisprudence.

Even Ralph Rossum, an admirer of Justice Scalia, concedes in the pages of the *Claremont Review of Books* that Scalia's "understanding of democracy" is essentially "vulgar majoritarianism." (Correspondence, Summer 2005). Scalia does not recognize that a majority, in the absence of minority rights, is not a democratic majority. Rossum goes on, however, to minimize the "practical consequences of Scalia's positivist assumptions." "If Scalia were a framer," he writes, "they would be significant—and harmful. But Scalia is simply a justice on the Supreme Court." Yet justices of the Supreme Court are in a peculiar sense trustees of the work of the framers. The framers' Constitution cannot survive if those entrusted with its preservation are alienated from its principles.

Rossum depreciates the importance of Scalia's philosophical differences with Justice Thomas by pointing out that "through the end of the Court's 2004-2005 term" the two agreed in 87.3% of all the cases they heard together. This statistic can be misleading. Scalia and Thomas, together with the late Chief Justice Rehnquist, formed a block that was often at war with the liberal majority. It was often in their interest to suppress their philosophical differences for the sake of tactical advantages. But tactical harmony must not be mistaken for common conviction.

The struggle for control of the Supreme Court is a profound political struggle, going to the heart of the meaning of our existence as a free people. For more than a half century, liberal judicial activism has been riding roughshod over the Constitution bequeathed to us by the founders. The origins of the "living Constitution" may be traced back to the Progressive Movement that flourished at the turn of the 20th century. For the Progressives it was settled "fact" (which was wholly untrue) that "history," especially in the form of Darwinian evolution, had replaced "nature" as the moral foundation of constitutionalism. Because men evolved, they could be made good—or at least good progressives—obviating any need for constitutional precautions on behalf of individual rights. In short, the original majoritarian process within the Constitution, subject as it was to checks and balances, became an obstacle to the unfettered rule of the progressive majority. From Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr., to William Brennan, progressive liberals began to look to the judiciary as a means of circumventing the Constitution. The Court came to be looked upon as the spokesman of the authentic majority, in the same way that the Communist Party's Central Committee claimed to be the authentic spokesman for the proletariat.

IN 1987 JUSTICE THURGOOD MARSHALL refused to celebrate the bicentennial of the Constitution because, he said, it was a racist document that enshrined slavery. Quoting Chief Justice Taney in *Dred Scott v. Sanford* (1857), he said that the original Constitution regarded black people "as so far inferior that they had no rights that white people were bound to respect." It is this view of the Constitution that has justified liberals, in their own minds, in rewriting the Constitution to conform to their own opinions of what it ought to be. Justice Scalia's recourse to "text and tradition" wilts in the face of this challenge.

The original Constitution, and hence original intent jurisprudence, can only be defended if one distinguishes the principles of the Constitution from the compromises of the Constitution. The framers made concessions to slavery because they believed that the Constitution would not be ratified without them. Had the Constitution not been ratified, slavery would have been in a far stronger position. Instead, the new Constitution created a government strong enough to deal with slavery when the crisis finally came. Moreover, the future of the Union as a guardian of the cause of human freedom throughout the world depended upon this distinction between the Constitution's principles and its compromises. But the Constitution itself does not make this distinction. Although it guarantees to every state of the Union a republican form of government, it does not say what the principles of this form are. These principles are spelled out in the Declaration of Independence, which the United States Code lists as the first of the Organic Laws of the United States. Yet Justice Scalia (and many other so-called originalists) finds no role whatever for the Declaration in constitutional jurisprudence, dismissing it as "fluff."

Professor Rossum believes that the character of the American people themselves is of



far more consequence than the reasons any justice gives for his rulings on their laws. He quotes James Wilson, as a spokesman for the founders and framers, that "for a people wanting to themselves, there is no remedy." Yet the debate over whether the Constitution is to be interpreted in the light of an evolving and ever-changing morality, or in the light of the eternal truths of a Creator, who endowed us with unalienable rights, is a struggle for the soul of the American people. How that struggle is resolved will determine the place of the judiciary, and much else besides, within our system of government. In that struggle, the best that one can say of Justice Scalia is that he is sadly wanting.

Harry V. Jaffa is a distinguished fellow of the Claremont Institute, and Professor Emeritus of Government at Claremont McKenna College and Claremont Graduate University. He is the author of several books, including *Original Intent and the Framers of the Constitution: A Disputed Question* (Regnery Gateway) and *Storm Over the Constitution* (Lexington Books).

A More Dependable Approach

by Ralph A. Rossum

WHAT SEPARATES PROFESSOR JAFFA and me is what separated Justices Samuel Chase and James Iredell in the 1798 case of *Calder v. Bull*. Justice Chase insisted that "an act of the Legislature contrary to the great first principles of the social compact cannot be considered a rightful exercise of legislative authority." Justice Iredell responded: "The Court cannot pronounce [such an act] to be void, merely because it is, in their judgment, contrary to the principles of natural justice. The ideas of natural justice are regulated by no fixed standard; the ablest and the purest of men have differed upon the subject."

I'll take my chances with Iredell, especially in an age when those who teach in our premier law schools and publish in the leading law reviews (and who therefore fundamentally shape

the minds of future Supreme Court justices) are not necessarily the "ablest and the purest of men" when it comes to questions of natural justice.

For every Supreme Court justice who agrees with Harry Jaffa's understanding of the principles of natural rights and their relation to the American Constitution (and I can only think of one: Clarence Thomas), there are several more (William Brennan, Thurgood Marshall, Stephen Breyer, and Ruth Bader Ginsburg all come to mind) who have drawn their understanding of these same principles from the writings of Ronald Dworkin, Bruce Ackerman, Owen Fiss, Michael Perry, and others. By basing their opinions on these flawed writings, these justices have subverted the very Constitution Jaffa fervently wishes to secure.

In our law schools today, there is at work a version of Gresham's Law: bad natural rights teachings have all but forced out good natural rights teachings. Given such corruption, I am inclined to rely on Justice Scalia's lower but more dependable (and more easily emulated) "text and tradition" approach to constitutional interpretation, especially since Scalia and Thomas have reached the same conclusion concerning that most important implication of the Declaration of Independence—the principle of racial equality.

In *Rutan v. Republican Party of Illinois* (1990), Justice Scalia made it clear that there was no need for him to accept the traditional understanding that the 14th Amendment's Equal Protection Clause tolerates racial segregation as it prevailed prior to *Brown v. Board of Education*. "I argue for the role of tradition in giving content only to ambiguous constitutional text; no tradition can supersede the Constitution." He continued, "[i]n my view the Fourteenth Amendment's requirement of 'equal protection of the laws,' combined with the Thirteenth Amendment's abolition of the institution of black slavery, leaves no room for doubt that laws treating people differently because of their race are invalid." Acknowledging that the 14th Amendment is not necessarily "crystal clear on this point," he nonetheless insisted that "a tradition of *unchallenged* validity did not exist with respect to the [segregationist practices challenged] in *Brown*." And he emphasized that the tradition that accepted "in the 19th century the principle of 'separate-but-equal' had been vigorously opposed on constitutional grounds, litigated up to this Court, and upheld only over the dissent of one of our historically most respected Justices. See *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1896) (Harlan, J., dissenting)."

Scalia associated himself with Justice Harlan's argument in *Plessy* that the Constitution is "color-blind"—a contention Sca-

lia had embraced expressly the year before in *City of Richmond v. Croson*. In *Rutan*, he also invoked the 13th Amendment, which helped to make "crystal clear" for him the meaning of the Equal Protection Clause. And by invoking both Harlan and the 13th Amendment, he thereby associated himself with Harlan's argument in *Plessy* that the amendment bans all "badges of slavery." As a logical positivist, Scalia cannot invoke the principles of the Declaration of Independence and conclude, as did Justice Thomas in *Adarand Constructors v. Peña* (1995), that, since "all men are created equal," racial discrimination of any kind is unconstitutional because contrary to the principles on which the Constitution is based. As a textualist, however, Scalia is able to reach the same conclusion by reading the 13th and 14th Amendments together and declaring invalid on that basis "laws treating people differently because of their race."

Ralph A. Rossum is Salvatori Professor of American Constitutionalism at Claremont McKenna College. His most recent book is *Antonin Scalia's Jurisprudence: Text and Tradition* (University Press of Kansas).

A Rebuttal

by Harry V. Jaffa

Ralph Rossum writes,

What separates Professor Jaffa and me is what separated Justices Samuel Chase and James Iredell in the 1798 case of *Calder v. Bull*. Justice Chase insisted that "an act of the Legislature contrary to the great first principles of the social compact cannot be considered a rightful exercise of legislative authority." Justice Iredell responded: "The Court cannot pronounce [such an act] to be void, merely because it is, in their judgment, contrary to the principles of natural justice. The ideas of natural justice are regulated by no fixed standard; the ablest and purest of men have differed upon the subject."

Here is what Chase considered acts "contrary to the great first principles of the social compact":



A law that punished a citizen for an innocent action or, in other words, for an act, which, when done, was in violation of no existing law; a law that destroyed, or impaired the lawful private contracts of citizens; a law that makes a man a judge in his own cause; or a law that takes property from A and gives it to B: It is against all reason and justice for a people to entrust a legislature with such powers; and, therefore, it cannot be presumed that they have done it.

I don't believe that Justice Iredell anymore than Justice Chase believed that the foregoing powers of government would not be by their nature tyrannical. It is therefore difficult to imagine anyone, not a tyrant, wishing to legitimate any of them. There is therefore in fact no difference between Chase and Iredell concerning the acts that Chase considered contrary to the principles of natural justice.

Calder v. Bull involved an act by the Connecticut legislature reversing the decision of a Connecticut probate court. The question arose whether the legislature had violated the prohibition of *ex post facto* laws in the U.S. Constitution. The Court decided that it had not done so, because the prohibition applied only to criminal cases, not to civil cases, and this was a civil case. The decision of the Court was unanimous. Justice Chase, who had signed the Declaration of Independence, proceeded however to deliver a lecture on the principles of the Declaration, by saying in effect that powers that clearly were tyrannical could never be legitimate powers of government. Iredell responded by agreeing with this, but adding the following clarification.

According to Iredell, it had been the policy of the American states, since the Revolution,

to define with precision the objects of the legislative power, and to restrain its exercise within marked and settled boundaries. If any act of Congress, or of the Legislature of a state, violates those constitutional provisions, it is unquestionably void.... If on the other hand the Legislature of the Union, or the Legislature of any member of the Union, shall pass a law, within the general scope of their constitutional power, the Court cannot pronounce it to be void merely because it is, in their judgment, contrary to the principles of natural justice.

We see that Iredell, no less than Chase, required that the legislature operate "within the general scope of their constitutional power." But Iredell denies that the Court has any reason to apply an additional test of whether a just and reasonable power of government has been used in what the Court considers the most just and reasonable way. Judgments of this kind are best made within the political process.

Chase and Iredell agreed that the power to pass *ex post facto* laws in criminal cases could never be the means to good ends, and therefore ought never to exist in any government. Iredell's last word on this, is that "Providence never can intend to promote the prosperity of any country by bad means." If this does not make him a natural law jurist, what could?

PROFESSOR ROSSUM FURTHER DEFENDS Justice Scalia's flawed constitutionalism on the ground that the state of constitutional scholarship is so bad that any attempt to improve it would probably make it worse. He speaks, apparently approvingly,

of "Harry Jaffa's understanding of the principles of natural rights and their relation to the American Constitution." But he dismisses the aforesaid understanding, presumably because it is no more than a flyspeck on today's juridical landscape. But whatever authority such scholarship may claim is not personal, but represents the constitutionalism of Abraham Lincoln, who ought to have standing against the gabbling geese of law school professors. But Scalia, I have reason to believe, has no more regard for Lincoln's constitutionalism than for that of any of the gabbling geese. Meanwhile, the divorce between constitutional law and the Constitution grows apace.

Professor Rossum praises Justice Scalia for reaching the same conclusion as Justice Thomas in *Rutan v. Republican Party of Illinois*. He remarks however that "as a logical positivist Scalia cannot invoke the principles of the Declaration of Independence...as did Justice Thomas." Why not? The Declaration is not a private preserve. It is open to Scalia no less than to Thomas (as it was to Chase and Iredell) or to anyone else. It also happens to be the first of the four Organic Laws of the United States, according to the United States Code, adopted by the Congress. As such it is, as Lincoln maintained, the first of the laws of the United States and by the strictest construction of positive law, the controlling legal authority as to the meaning of the principles of the Constitution.

That Justice Scalia sometimes reaches right conclusions from wrong premises is not, as Professor Rossum seems to suggest, a justification of wrong premises. We need to reclaim our great heritage, not lament the fate that brought us to our present crisis.

SACRED TEXTS

Interpreting the Bible and the Constitution, by Jaroslav Pelikan.
Yale University Press, 240 pages, \$30

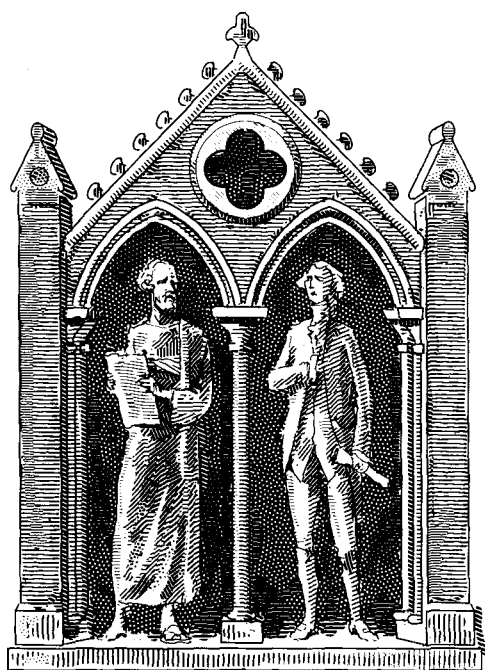
AMERICANS HAVE LONG LIKENED THEIR Constitution to the Bible, an analogy usually intended to cultivate a reverence for the former by imbuing it with the sacred authority of the latter. George Washington, for instance, cherished the hope that "the free constitution" would "be sacredly maintained," while James Madison counseled his fellow citizens to look upon their national charters as "political scriptures" and to guard them "with a holy zeal" against "every attempt to add to or diminish from them." The similarities have been underscored ever since. Supreme Court Justice Hugo Black—who was raised in one of Christianity's most thoroughly bibliocentric traditions, the Primitive Baptist Church—once proclaimed the Constitution his "legal bible," which he treasured "every word of...from the first to the last." Ronald Reagan summed up the Declaration, Constitution, and Bill of Rights as "a gift from a loving God."

Such comparisons are made, of course, because the two documents are widely regarded as uniquely authoritative. As churches self-consciously define themselves with reference to the Bible, so do American citizens with reference to the Constitution. Yet the act of self-definition requires constant recourse to the text, engaging the written word in order to extract its relevant meaning. Words convey ideas, as Publius explained in *Federalist* 37, but their meaning is inexorably "rendered dim and doubtful by the cloudy medium through which it is communicated." The process is rendered all the more difficult "according to the complexity and novelty of the objects defined," and their true sense is only to be ascertained through "a series of particular discussions and adjudications."

Jaroslav Pelikan delves into just such a series of scriptural discussions and constitutional adjudications in his new book, *Interpreting the Bible and the Constitution*. In it, he compares the ways in which specific authorities have employed various strategies to resolve perceived textual ambiguities. He offers a "history of 'constructions' that have been promulgated by those who bear official responsibility for binding interpretation."

Pelikan brings enormous erudition to the task. He is perhaps the most respected living authority on the history of Christian theology; his many academic honors include a Sterling professorship (emeritus) at Yale University, as

well as the Library of Congress's second John W. Kluge Prize for Lifetime Achievement in the Human Sciences. In six decades of prolific scholarship, Pelikan has authored or edited nearly 40 books, to say nothing of hundreds of articles and lectures. Generations of seminarians and graduate students have cut their teeth on his five-volume *The Christian Tradition* (1971-1989), which has eclipsed Adolf von Harnack's *Dogmengeschichte* (1886-1890) as the definitive account of Christian doctrinal history.



IT IS HARDLY UNEXPECTED, THEN, THAT Pelikan would write a book on biblical interpretation. What may perhaps be surprising is that he brings scriptural exegesis into conversation with constitutional interpretation. Having long labored at the "unfashionable enterprise" of studying "creeds, confessions, and biblical exegesis," Pelikan sees a line of "direct continuity" between the two hermeneutical projects.

Both texts assume rather than argue for their authority, yet they are received as familiar and venerable. Each is the product of many authors, and has aroused among its many readers intense argument over its proper exegesis. Each has been lovingly studied, line by line, word by word, yet each is also understood, to varying degrees, by significant points of doctrine elaborated outside the document itself: Christians read the Bible in light of the trinitarian and Christological doctrines promulgated by

the early ecumenical councils, while Americans read the Constitution through the natural right principles enunciated in the Declaration of Independence. Each acknowledges the reality of its own internal self-correction—testaments on the one hand, amendments on the other. Yet even beyond such internal mechanisms, each assumes itself to be ever applicable to the endlessly shifting conditions of later generations.

Both therefore constitute a "Great Code," a normative text, the meaning of which must be constantly applied to changing circumstances. Easier said than done, of course, as various passages from either text give rise to the difficulty Pelikan calls a *crux interpretum*: a cluster of words and concepts so dense with significance as to engender multiple, possibly contradictory, readings. (One recalls, for example, the controversies surrounding the four little words "due process of law," or the biblical "this is my body.") The interpretive task is further compounded by the fact that neither document identifies relevant proof texts nor explicitly prescribes a correct method for its own interpretation. In both cases there is a hierarchy of interpreters—from the entire community at the lowest point, through professional classes, up to the towering institutions of the interpretive elite—notwithstanding the fact that neither text identifies which specific person, group, or institution has the final authority to bind and loose its meaning. But for all that shared ambiguity, Pelikan observes, in neither case should the sudden eruption of violent conflict among interpreters obscure the much longer periods of silent consensus.

DISPUTES DO, HOWEVER, MARK THE history of both reading communities. Of particular difficulty in both cases is the perennial problem of the spirit and the letter of the law, the one which liveth, and the other which giveth death. But, as Christians and Americans alike have learned, a spirit unconstrained by the letter gives rise to its own gnostic tendencies. Justice William O. Douglas, no less than the second-century heresiarch Valentinus, claimed for himself a mysterious enlightenment, capable of discerning penumbral meanings invisibly emanating from the page.

If interpretation is to be credibly tethered to the text, some consistent exegetical strategy must be devised and applied. Etymology, gram-



mar, philology, natural law, analogy, precedent, history—all manner of interpretive techniques have been deployed to resolve contested constructions. Among these methods, the invocation of original intent has been particularly privileged for both the Bible and the Constitution. Recourse to intent derives its power in both communities from a widespread veneration of the authors, from a sense that special deference is owed to those who bore witness in the beginning. Pelikan, however, retains an ambivalence about originalist assumptions and methods, arguing that they “run the constant danger of substituting pedantry for living experience.”

One may perhaps attribute Pelikan’s suspicion of originalism, and his amenability to the idea of developmental interpretation, to his long and fruitful study of Christian history. The Bible, after all, is vastly more complex than the Constitution. Its internal narratives, its lyrical poetry and thundering prophecy, its layers upon layers of meaning, all serve to distance it from the Constitution. If the latter expresses the structure of government resulting from the reflection and choice of “we the people,” the former attempts to bear faithful witness to man’s encounter with an ineffa-

bly mysterious reality. Moreover, as Pelikan acknowledges, the Christian scriptures are widely thought to consist of both letter and spirit, law and gospel, whereas the letter of the Constitution is incomplete without being animated by the spirit of the Declaration.

FOR ALL ITS INGENUITY, IT REMAINS possible to imagine Pelikan’s book assuming other forms. Instead of comparing, say, 19th-century American jurisprudence with ecumenical councils from the patristic era, Pelikan could have restricted his study of biblical and constitutional interpretation to the United States, discovering even more, otherwise obscure, similarities.

At the dawn of the 19th century, interpretation in both disciplines was governed by the logic of the text itself. Blackstone’s principles of construction guided readers through either text; one would begin with a close exegesis of the words themselves and ascend through a study of the context, the subject matter, the effects or consequences of a line of interpretation, and the spirit or reason of the whole. By the close of the 19th century, however, an emerging professorial class came to scorn such proof-text methods as

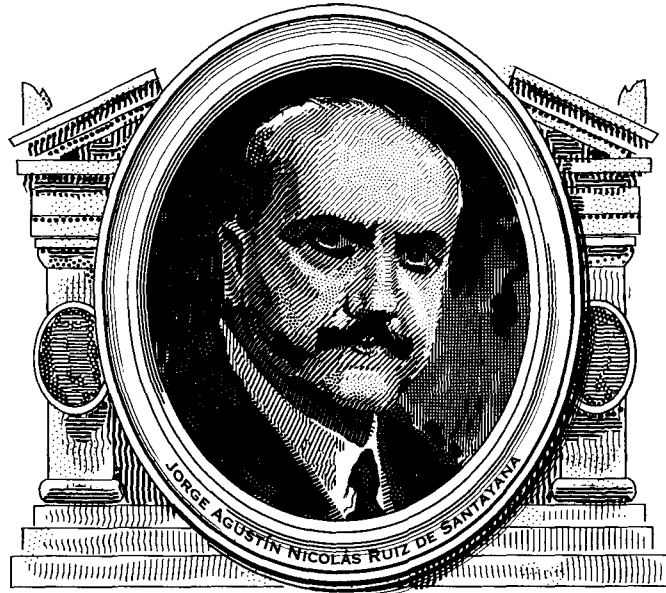
hopelessly naïve. These strategies, the thinking went, utterly failed to appreciate historical particularity, and altogether lacked a sense of the vast chasm separating the past from the present. Ancient texts must give way to modern expectations, and good progressives learned to read both documents with scissors in hand, ready to excise all that challenged the wisdom of the moment. Thus pruned of their presumed deadwood, both texts were at last able to live and breathe. It is remarkable how closely the emergence of such historicist assumptions in each field tracked one another, and how deeply they altered the study of both the Bible and the Constitution.

It is unfair, of course, to criticize Pelikan for a book he did not write. This dean of the Christian heritage has not only identified new ground for younger academics to explore, he has provided a characteristically brilliant and original conceptual overview, one that generations of scholars will need to read—and interpret.

*Christopher Levenick is a W. H. Brady fellow at the American Enterprise Institute. His doctoral dissertation, *Constructing America, compares developments in biblical and constitutional interpretation during the 19th century.**

Essay by Algis Valiunas

PHILOSOPHY IN DEMOCRATIC TIMES



“THOSE WHO CANNOT REMEMBER the past are condemned to repeat it.” If George Santayana (1863-1952) is remembered today, it is as the fellow who coined this monumental *aperçu*—though often as not, he fails to get credit even for that, the attribution going instead to someone like Mencken or FDR or even Henry Kissinger. Old men forget, and the young have never heard of Santayana in the first place, or get him confused with an aging demigod of rock and roll. But no other 20th-century American thinker, perhaps no other 20th-century thinker pure and simple, better fits the description of a real philosopher than George Santayana.

Philosopher, poet, playwright, novelist, autobiographer, literary critic, cultural historian of the broadest sweep, Santayana possessed as formidable a combination of mental keenness and literary grace as any man short of Plato or Shakespeare can hope for. He thought and wrote beautifully. Anything he had to say—and he had something luminous to say about almost everything—he said with precision, subtlety, and panache. Santayana became master of a language that was not his by birth. He was born in Spain of Spanish parents and then at the age of nine, in accordance “with a sort of prenatal or pre-established destiny,” was hauled off to Boston by his father. On returning to Spain after his freshman year at Harvard, he found nothing in Spanish life or literature to engage his temperament, and subsequently devoted himself to English let-

ters in order “to say plausibly in English as many un-English things as possible.” In the course of a serenely unsettled life that included 38 voyages across the North Atlantic, he never managed to shake off his predisposition to seasickness.

The Unvarnished Truth of the World

HARVARD CLAIMS HIM AS ONE OF ITS OWN, with some pride and not without some justice. He was a philosophy student and then a colleague of the pragmatist William James and the Hegelian Josiah Royce, and among his own students were T.S. Eliot and Wallace Stevens. But as he says in his autobiography, he never really wanted to be a teacher, only a student; and when he came into an inheritance in 1912, that was the last Harvard and America were to see of him, though he would have plenty yet to say about them in his writings. His portmanteau would bear the labels of numerous winsome stopping-places—capital cities, outposts of intellect, beauty spots—in England, France, Spain, and Italy. Great universities courted him, but he did not swerve from the life he wanted, which allowed him to read and write and think just as he pleased. With the Second World War imminent, he sought refuge in Switzerland but was denied entry; a Spanish citizen residing in Rome with American and English bank accounts, evidently he was too shady a cosmopolite even for Swiss tastes. In October 1941 the

Little Company of Mary, a nursing order of Catholic nuns, gave him a room in their Rome sanatorium. Early in his stay, learned priests were enlisted to bring him around to the faith in which he had been baptized, but he knew the theological arguments better than they did, tied them in impious knots, and cleaved to his unruffled philosopher’s atheism. “There is no God and Mary is his mother,” he is said to have said in defense of his emphatic unbelief. Left in peace, he lived out the remaining eleven years of his life in Epicurean contentment. He was wise and lucky enough that death did not come hard.

Santayana’s long lifetime of passionately dispassionate thinking left voluminous and elegant remains. His writings include *Sonnets and Other Verses* (1894), *The Sense of Beauty* (1896), *Lucifer: A Theological Tragedy* (1899), *Interpretations of Poetry and Religion* (1900), *The Life of Reason* (five volumes, 1905-1906), *Three Philosophical Poets* (1910), *Scepticism and Animal Faith* (1923), *Platonism and the Spiritual Life* (1927), *The Realms of Being* (four volumes, 1927-1940), *The Idea of Christ in the Gospels* (1946), and *Dominations and Powers* (1951). His one novel, *The Last Puritan* (1935), and his three-volume autobiography, *Persons and Places* (1944-1953), were picked up by the Book-of-the-Month Club and made a remarkable splash. In 1936, Santayana appeared on the cover of *Time*, which is not known as a showcase for philosophers even when they happen to write best-selling novels.

The poem "Cape Cod" provides a point of entry to Santayana's mind, and is of interest precisely because it finds him uncharacteristically disconsolate:

The wretched stumps all charred and
burned,
And the deep soft rut where the cart-
wheel turned,—
Why is the world so old?

The lapping wave, and the broad gray
sky
Where the cawing crows and the slow
gulls fly,—
Where are the dead untold?

The thin slant willows by the flooded
bog,
The huge stranded hulk and the floating
log,—
Sorrow with life began!

And among the dark pines, and along the
flat shore
O the wind, and the wind, for evermore!
What will become of man?

The plainspoken heartbreak with which he regards a nature that seems bent on extruding man from itself, once and for all, has affinities with A.E. Housman and Thomas Hardy. The bleak plaintiveness of the abrupt lines that cap each stanza could as easily be the response of a precocious child as of an aged sage, and is the unanswered, perhaps the unanswerable, outcry of unaccommodated man in a cold dark world. One is tempted to say that this native anguish is what philosophy overcame in Santayana's temperament, but that might not be quite right. In *Persons and Places* he recalls the emotionally disheveled household of his Spanish boyhood, after his mother and his siblings had gone off to America without him and left him with an uncle and aunt:

That crowded, strained, disunited, and tragic family life remains for me the type of what life really is: something confused, hideous, and useless. I do not hate it or rebel against it, as people do who think they have been wronged. It caused me no suffering;...and my eyes and ears became accustomed to the unvarnished truth of the world, neither selected for my instruction nor hidden from me for my benefit.

If we are to believe him, Santayana came to see the nature of things without suffering the pangs of disillusionment; the truth was undeniable, so he never wasted his breath trying to deny it. And as the title of the final volume of

his autobiography, *My Host the World*, suggests, he found sufficiently agreeable accommodation wherever he happened to roam.

They Had Forgotten the Greeks

WHICH IS NOT TO SAY HE WAS EVER really at home anywhere. Truly congenial minds were especially hard to find. In *Persons and Places* he writes, "The intellectual world of my time alienated me intellectually. It was a Babel of false principles and blind cravings...." Perhaps his greatest strength lay in identifying where other thinkers—even whole nations of them in concert—went off the rails. *Egotism in German Philosophy* (1915), *Character and Opinion in the United States* (1920), and *Soliloquies in England and Later Soliloquies* (published together in 1922) are principally indictments of characteristic forms of philosophic wrongdoing, as practiced by the men generally held to be wisest in their respective homelands.

The Harvard at which Santayana studied and taught enjoys a reputation as the storied cynosure of American philosophy at the height of its glory. Santayana found it badly deficient in the speculative essentials. As he puts it in *Persons and Places*, "It may be conceit on my part but I think I was the only free and disinterested thinker among the Harvard philosophers." *Character and Opinion in the United States* is a genetic critique of American philosophy, as unflattering as Nietzsche's of Christianity, and it shows how the philosophies of thinkers as different as William James and Josiah Royce are shaped by their personal temperaments, and also how their temperaments are shaped by the pressure, all but imperceptible and all but irresistible, of the national temperament. In particular, Santayana is concerned with the way that a congenital public-spiritedness stunts the growth of the spiritual life. That is, both James and Royce felt themselves "bound by two different responsibilities, that of describing things as they are, and that of finding them propitious to certain preconceived human desires."

At the Harvard which Santayana describes, the faculty of course enjoyed freedom of thought, but the thoughts that they were free to think gave them small joy. Their speculation, nominally free to romp like the mind of God, in F. Scott Fitzgerald's phrase, chafed against a tacit moral constraint:

You might think what you liked, but you must consecrate your belief or your unbelief to the common task of encouraging everybody and helping everything on. You might almost be an atheist, if you were troubled enough about it. The atmosphere was not that of intelligence and science, it was that of duty.

Preoccupation with the general well-being virtually proscribed the disinterestedness that allows one to let a thought take him where it will. This philanthropic concern redirected wayward philosophical impulses into socially acceptable channels.

It also directed men whose inclinations were hardly philosophical into the so-called profession of philosophy. The professional disposition of most younger academic philosophers, who tend to have "the type of mind of a doctor, an engineer, or a social reformer," is one that Santayana finds distinctly ill-suited for long, solitary flights of thought:

He has no peace in himself, no window open to a calm horizon, and in his heart perhaps little taste for mere scholarship or pure speculation. Yet, like the plain soldier staggering under his clumsy equipment, he is cheerful; he keeps his faith in himself and in his allotted work, puts up with being toasted only on one side, remains open-minded, whole-hearted, appreciative, helpful, confident of the future of goodness and of science. In a word, he is a cell in that teeming democratic body; he draws from its warm, contagious activities the sanctions of his own life and, less consciously, the spirit of his philosophy.

The university shaped itself to the young representatives of the world who streamed through it and whom it was supposed somehow to form. To the "intellectual innocence" of the worldly students, "the Harvard philosophers adapted their teaching and to some extent their philosophy." The teachers were there to tell the students what they already knew, to reinforce their belief in the supreme value of respectable behavior, to strengthen their adherence "to those prejudices which help us to lead what we all feel is a good life."

But what is a good life? Had William James, had the people around him, had modern philosophers anywhere, any notion of that? I cannot think so. They had much experience of personal goodness, and love of it; they had standards of character and right conduct; but as to what might render human existence good, excellent, beautiful, happy, and worth having as a whole, their notions were utterly thin and barbarous. They had forgotten the Greeks, or never known them.

Investing in futures, they had divested themselves of the incomparably rich past.

Although Santayana sees William James as belonging to a well-known tradition, that tradi-

tion is not pre-eminently an intellectual one: [He] fell in with the hortatory tradition of college sages; he turned his psychology, whenever he could do so honestly, to purposes of edification; and his little sermons on habit, on will, on faith, and...on the latent capacities of men, were fine and stirring, and just the sermons to preach to the young Christian soldier.

In "A Brief History of My Opinions" Santayana recalls the distress that James's *Pragmatism* caused him: "I could not stomach that way of speaking about truth..." What makes Santayana's gorge rise is the way in which the idiom and the ethos of the marketplace, of American go-getterism, have insinuated themselves into James's discourse. Here is James's characteristic mode, in which he disowns the notion that truth is one and incontrovertible, and endorses a multiplicity of truths that remain true only so long as they prove useful: "Our account of truth is an account of truths in the plural, or processes of leading, realized in *rebus*, and having only this quality in common, that they pay." The proof of James's truths is their ability to deliver the goods. The American small change of unconsidered common opinion, the

medium of everyday traffic, comes to pass as hard philosophical currency. The pragmatic "account of truths" underwrites the promise of a future that pays big time. Hence the hopeful ring of so much of James's prose, which anticipates the clattering avalanche of the jackpot sure to follow the next yank on the lever, or the one after that.

Discontents of a Native Son

WHEN THE MOST APPEALING HOME-grown wisdom that America has to offer is the refined boosterism of William James—and crassness refined is still hell on a palate of any delicacy—what hope can there be for a native son with an inchoate spiritual vocation that the world is determined to mock, tame, or throttle at every turn? *The Last Puritan* is the story of Oliver Alden, an intelligent, sensitive, handsome, strong, rich young man who wants to live the best life there is but has a fiendish time trying to discover what that might be; it does not help that, as with the young Jean-Jacques in Rousseau's *Confessions* or Saul Bellow's *Augie March*, virtually everyone around him thinks he knows what is good for Oliver better than Oliver knows it himself, and

he cannot resist their assorted solicitations, blandishments, and strong-arm maneuvers. He takes to the life that is generally being lived as though it were the only one available,

not because [he] found their ways right or reasonable or beautiful or congenial, but just because those ways, here and now, were the ways of life and the actions afoot; and there was no real choice open to [him] to live otherwise or to live better.

Santayana's novel is his farewell testimonial to America, written some 20 years after he had left the country for good, and it is his fullest treatment of what he considers to be the ultimate question that American democracy poses: how does a man of exceptional spiritual gifts become what he ought to be in the face of forces that compel him to turn out like everybody else? The rampant philistinism that Oliver cannot fight off is only part of his problem. A thin-blooded priggishness, the spiritual vestige of the dying Puritanism that Oliver represents, is the best he can muster in resistance to the dominant new American energy; that is not good enough for the purpose, and creates difficulties all its own.

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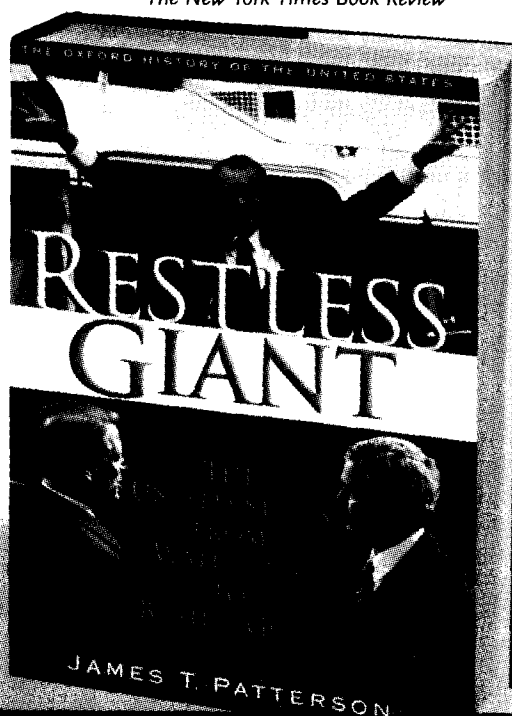
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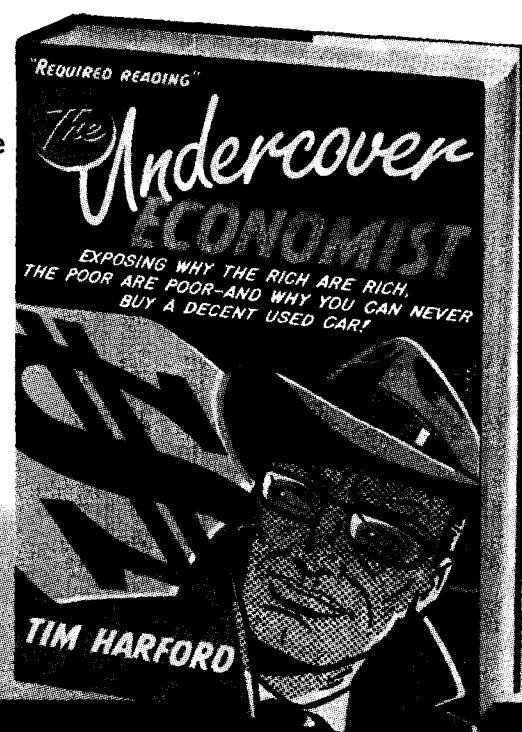
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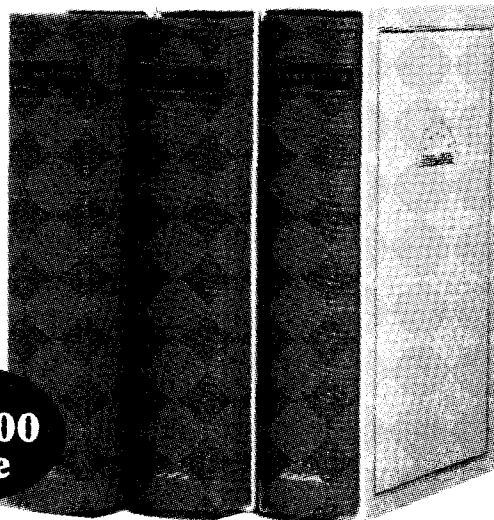
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For Oliver needs a comprehensive explanation of the world in order to be able to live contentedly in it: "He could find no peace unless he justified his natural sympathies theoretically and turned them into moral maxims." A philosophy student of Santayana's at Harvard (Santayana is the book's narrator), Oliver never does learn to think as his teacher does, in joyful pursuit of the truth, whatever the truth might be, but goes about his thinking in the dogged and even desperate manner of someone for whom the truth is his only possible salvation. "Either the truth or nothing," he grimly avows. Earnest and dutiful to the end, he dies on the Western Front, the First World War just over, in a car wreck. Hopeless in love, lacking any true vocation, "he would have gained nothing by living to a hundred." His latent beauty is never brought anywhere near perfection.

A Golden Mediocrity

AT THE CENTER OF SANTAYANA'S MORAL philosophy is a vision of what earthly perfection might be, in which each person fully realizes his own nature and has no wish to be anything other than what he is. In this best of worlds, envy and other false longing would be eradicated, without the specious expedient, which has attracted a considerable following in modern times, of reducing humanity to a lackluster sameness. "There is no greater stupidity or meanness than to take uniformity for an ideal," Santayana writes in *The Life of Reason*. He never goes so far as to indicate that such a world of utterly fulfilled and singular men is possible, but he does suggest that this ideal is the one toward which every man ought to incline his heart, in the hope that some will thereby get a glimpse, or even a taste, of the happiness of attaining their truest selves.

This is a democratic ideal with aristocratic overtones: each man would enjoy all the satisfactions of his proper station, and would be exempt from any irksome yearnings for a grander fate. Santayana's ideal mediates between two democratic tendencies, each with its own characteristic distress: on the one hand, the insistence that you deserve as good as the next man has got, however superior the next man might happen to be, and on the other, the insistence that you are fine just the way you are and want to be nothing more—which tends to be a rueful means of living with the realization, half-concealed from yourself, that you really do not deserve as good as the next man or, for that matter, as legions of other men besides. To our self-actualizing age, over which the Oprahs and the Chopras exercise dominion, Santayana's prescription for happiness sounds vaguely attractive yet is ultimately uncongenial. He wants people to accept the portion that life has handed them, but he has no use



for the emotional sleight-of-hand with which one secretly palms his resentment, pretends it has vanished, and triumphantly proclaims himself perfectly satisfied. To see with utter honesty what one happens to be by nature and to take pleasure in that fact is Santayana's test of human happiness. Under the current dispensation, most men need not apply.

Santayana is not without hope that ordinary unphilosophical men might enjoy a happiness greater than that afforded them by the revved-up democratic scramble; and his misgivings about democracy are founded upon a solid democratic sympathy. "But for the excellence of the typical single life, no nation deserves to be remembered more than the sands of the sea; and America will not be a success, if every American is a failure." So he writes in his remarkable essay on Dickens, whom he treasures as the poet of "a golden mediocrity," of democratic life in its peculiarly unassuming glory—not quite the same as saying, at its highest pitch. For Santayana is well aware that democracy does have its noble spirits, who stand out among the multitude; but here he, like Dickens, sees what the lordly and the lowly have in common, under the aspect of eternity:

He had a sentiment in the presence of this vast flatness of human fates, in spite of their individual pungency, which I think might well be the dominant sentiment of mankind in the future; a sense of happy freedom in littleness, an open-eyed reverence and religion without words. This universal human anonymity is like a sea, an infinitive democratic desert, chock-full and yet the very image of emptiness, with nothing in it for the mind, except, as the Moslems say, the presence of Allah. Awe is the counterpart of humility—and this is perhaps religion enough. The atom in the universal vortex ought to be humble; he ought to see that, materially, he doesn't much matter, and that morally his loves are merely his own, without authority over the universe. He can admit without obloquy that he is what he is; and he can rejoice in his own being, and in that of all other things in so far as he can share it sympathetically.

The supreme democratic artist, whom Santayana believes Dickens to be, is gifted with the sympathy that enables him to turn out uncounted human forms of the most preposterous singularity; everyone, however misshapen or odd, has his appointed place in Dickens's world, as in nature's own:

The most grotesque creatures of Dickens are not exaggerations or mockeries of

something other than themselves; they arise because nature generates them, like toadstools; they exist because they can't help it, as we all do.

The philosopher defers to the novelist when it comes to comprehending the world's variety, which sometimes moves Santayana to irrepressible laughter. In "Occam's Razor," Santayana gives thanks with a chuckle that the peopling of Creation was not conducted with philosophical rigor: "If God or nature had used Occam's razor and had hesitated to multiply beings without necessity, where should we be?"

The Failure of Liberalism

HUMAN VARIETY MAY WELL BE THE defining shibboleth of 19th and 20th century ethical and political philosophy, and of democratic public life. The epigraph from Wilhelm von Humboldt that John Stuart Mill places at the head of *On Liberty* reads, "The grand, leading principle, towards which every argument unfolded in these pages directly converges, is the absolute and essential importance of human development in its richest diversity." Giving a nod to Mill, Walt Whitman opens *Democratic Vistas* with the assertion, "As the greatest lessons of Nature through the universe are perhaps the lessons of variety and freedom, the same present the greatest lessons also in New World politics and progress." Some years down the line, the U.S. Supreme Court declared in *Planned Parenthood v. Casey* in 1992 that "at the heart of liberty is the right to define one's own concept of existence, of meaning, of the universe, and of the mystery of human life." Such brassy pronouncements do rally the believers, but their truth is not self-evident to all. The pertinent questions remain alive and dangerous. Can variety and freedom be ends in themselves? What limits can authority reasonably place in the name of virtue on variety and freedom?

Santayana points the way into those questions, and maybe even indicates a way out. There is at least a touch of the huckster, he discerns, in the most magniloquent promoters of liberty—for instance, William James. The problem is not so much that James's typically liberal notion of liberty is uninhibited as that it is aimless, Santayana writes in *Character and Opinion*:

Liberty is not an art, liberty must be used to bring some natural art to fruition. Shall it be simply eating and drinking and wondering what will happen next? If there is some deep and settled need in the heart of man, to give direction to his efforts, what else should a philosopher do but discover and announce what that need is?

What is the good of liberty if liberty gets you no nearer the good?

And about the good, liberalism cannot but be indefinite, for its guiding presupposition is that the world allows for at least as many goods as there are men. As Santayana writes in "Liberalism and Culture," one of a quartet of brilliant essays on classical and modern liberty in *Later Soliloquies*, the liberal ideal

implies that the ultimate environment, divine or natural, is either chaotic in itself or undiscoverable by human science, and that human nature, too, is either radically various or only determinable in a few essentials, round which individual variations play *ad libitum*. For this reason no normal religion, science, art, or way of happiness can be prescribed.

Such an understanding of the cosmic arrangements might seem not at all antipathetic to Santayana's temperament, and indeed he prefers this pure strain of liberalism to its unsavory adulterated version, that of the philanthropic reformer who "exerts himself to turn all men into the sort of men he likes, so as to be able to like them."

Nevertheless, even pure liberalism Santayana considers essentially a failure, linked as it is to a doctrine of unrelenting material progress that, inexorable as fate, stamps purportedly free men into shapes of a dismaying uniformity. In America particularly, the soul that insists on its distinctiveness—that cannot but insist—finds precious little to sustain it:

The luckless American who is born a conservative, or who is drawn to poetic subtlety, pious retreats, or gay passions, nevertheless has the categorical excellence of work, growth, enterprise, reform, and prosperity dinned into his ears: every door is open in this direction and shut in the other; so that he either folds up his heart and withers in a corner—in remote places you sometimes find such a solitary gaunt idealist—or else he flies to Oxford or Florence or Montmartre to save his soul—or perhaps not to save it.

Sublimities in Sensible Shoes

AND THERE IS YET ANOTHER MATTER that chills Santayana's admiration for liberalism: he knows of something better; perhaps he even knows what is best, because it is the truth. In ancient Greek materialist philosophy, he writes in *Three Philosophical Poets* (they are Lucretius, Dante, and Goethe), is to be found "perhaps the greatest thought that mankind has ever hit upon.... It is that all we

observe about us, and ourselves also, may be so many passing forms of a permanent substance." Santayana's hero Democritus divined the stuff of the universe to be matter, strictly matter, consisting of atoms and ceaselessly moving in the void. The spectacle of so much cosmic dust stirred into intermittent liveliness offers a rather dispiriting truth about the place of man in all this; "but being a truth, it satisfies and exalts the rational mind, that craves truth as truth, whether it be sad or comforting, and wishes to pursue a possible, not an impossible, happiness." Possible happiness might best be found in an appreciation for nature's show as it goes irrevocably by—in "sympathy with the movement of things, interest in the rising wave, delight at the foam it bursts into, before it sinks again." The prospect of immortality no honest naturalist can countenance; the life we have now is the only one we are going to get, and at best we might hope to draw vital energy from nature that will make our life not merely a trial to be endured but a gift to be loved. Still, nature does not parcel out her gifts equally, and there are bound to be those men who hate their own lives and who thus take no pleasure in nature. To the broken and despondent, who are not a few, Santayana can offer no consolation. The truth is what it is, and that means some people are simply out of luck.

Santayana writes for those strong enough to accept without yelping the harsh terms that nature imposes on those it has brought into being. "There is no cure for birth or death save to enjoy the interval." The weightiest matters can be handled lightly, with a decorously murmuring quip. Santayana's demeanor here is about as far as can be from the signature lightning-grasping heroics of Nietzsche, which set the tone for a strain of bold desperation in such thinkers as Heidegger, Sartre, and Foucault. Where Nietzsche sings to the most daring souls who will brave the direst alpine perils of the spirit, Santayana generally offers sublimities that can be enjoyed in sensible shoes. Nietzsche shouts from the mountaintops, "A philosopher—is a human being who constantly experiences, sees, hears, suspects, hopes, and dreams extraordinary things...." Santayana never raises his voice, but simply thinks extraordinary things and sets them down in his calm and measured way. And yet one can see the resemblance between the two philosophers, both of whom offer instruction in how to make a fundamentally meaningless and inhospitable world feel like home.

Even when he seeks out the dangerous heights beyond good and evil, Santayana makes them seem like perfect resting places for the venturesome wanderer. In one of his most celebrated essays, "The Genteel Tradition in American Philosophy," originally a lecture delivered at Berkeley in 1911, he tells his audience that the antidote to the noxious philosophical

presumption that "man, or human reason, or the human distinction between good and evil, is the center and pivot of the universe" can be found in "your forests and your Sierras":

In their non-human beauty and peace they stir the sub-human depths and the super-human possibilities of your own spirit. It is no transcendental logic that they teach; and they give no sign of any deliberate morality seated in the world. It is rather the vanity and superficiality of all logic, the needlessness of argument, the finitude of morals, the strength of time, the fertility of matter, the variety, the unspeakable variety, of possible life.

To contemplate in wonder the vastness and splendor of nature, Santayana suggests, is to see man's appointed place in Creation, and to recognize that the world is basically indifferent to human preference. A sense of smallness and contingency is appropriate to our lot, as is a somewhat tremulous natural piety. In *Egotism in German Philosophy*, Santayana pillories certain thinkers, mostly but not exclusively German, for their moral bumptiousness, which prompts them to consider themselves beings essentially of their own making, and to ascribe to their own mind and will the power of fashioning the world in their image:

It is a trap into which high speculation may easily fall, but it denies that we are created beings owing reverence to immense forces beyond ourselves, which endow us with our limited faculties and powers, govern our fortunes, and shape our very loves without our permission.

Philosophical egotists assume that nature's inexhaustible and amoral plenum reflects their superbly unrestrained human selves; genteel moralists believe that nature's sunniness and congeniality will shine brightly upon their admirable uprightness. Santayana is quite sure both are wrong. In his view, the inclination to impose one's fondest wishes upon a defiantly profligate nature poses to philosophy perhaps its most daunting challenge. Most people, deep thinkers included, want the world to fit their desires; and the world has a way of reducing such desires to hash. "The attempt to subsume the natural order under the moral is like attempts to establish a government of the parent by the child—something children are not averse to," Santayana writes in *The Life of Reason*. In the 1931 essay "The Genteel Tradition at Bay," he derides the "daylight religion" that, with ludicrous hopefulness, swears by an imperial anthropocentrism, as though the universe were "nothing but an enlarged edition, or an expurgated edition, of human life."

A Case for Morality

THAT WOULD APPEAR TO BE THAT. THE life of men, one gathers, must be an insignificant accident in a universe morally frigid and barren. And yet Santayana goes on to make a case for a natural morality peculiar to man: "the universe can sanction in man the virtues proper to man without needing to imitate them on its own immeasurable scale." That is, human life has its inherent and distinctive forms of virtue, and seems to be no mere accident. Still, human virtue is underwritten only by natural authority, not by supernatural; and the question remains whether nature, which generally does not operate in accordance with morality, by that very fact endorses moral anarchy in the human sphere. Yes and no, Santayana replies. To "the absolute or monocular moralist," there is no legitimacy to a purely natural morality for men; this is the understanding, put in lapidary fashion by Dostoyevsky, that if there is no God, everything is permitted. "But for the philosopher with two eyes, the natural status of morality in the animal world does not exclude the greatest vigor in those moral judgments and moral passions which belong to his nature."

One might suspect that the two-eyed philosopher is winking with one of those eyes; moral vigor is hardly the same as truth, and Santayana has plainly stated more than once that the best life is lived with truth as its standard. Perhaps the morally vigorous life is the best for most men, but the truthful—the fully rational—life is the best for those few who can live it. Such a view is of course hardly original with Santayana: it is the foundation of Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*, and likely of Socratic wisdom as well. At most Santayana seems to be saying that if there is any basis whatsoever for morality, it can be found only in human nature; the heavens are not to be consulted on the matter. Ultimately every man must be faithful not only to human nature in general but to the singular demands of his individual nature:

No true appreciation of anything is possible without a sense of its *naturalness*, of the innocent necessity by which it has assumed its special and perhaps extraordinary form. In a word, the principle of morality is naturalistic. Call it humanism or not, only a morality frankly relative to man's nature is worthy of man, being at once vital and rational, martial and generous; whereas absolutism smells of fustiness as well as of faggots.

If something exists in nature, it must be natural, and its right to flourish after its own fashion cannot be gainsaid. Only the intolerant absolut-



ists, their eyes gleaming with the festive light of *autos-da-fé*, are unworthy to represent humanity in its diverse splendor. Santayana thus comes out for both unbridled diversity and something like natural law. The culture wars got underway well before the 1960s, and both sides can find in Santayana the wisdom of their inmost desires, even as he stands apart from either camp.

A Reverence for Truth

EVEN BELIEVERS IN THE SUPERNATURAL are not left entirely without solace, however brazen in his disdain for them Santayana often appears:

If there be really a single supernatural vocation latent in all souls, I can imagine it revealed to some supreme sage in a tremendous vision, like that which came to Buddha under the Bo-Tree, or to Socrates when he heard, or dreamt that he heard, the Sibyl of Mantinea discoursing on mortal and immortal love. There is much in any man's experience, if he reflects, to persuade him that the circumstances of

this life are a strange accident to him, and that he belongs by nature to a different world.

And Santayana concedes that if the supernatural absolutists are right, then the human quality he most admires proves mere delusion:

If, for instance, the human soul were supernatural and had its proper life and perfection in another world, then indeed all the variety of human tastes, temperaments, and customs would be variety only in self-ignorance and error.

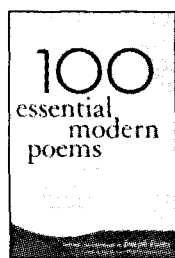
One is reminded of those medieval depictions of hell and heaven in which the damned are twisted every which way, each distinct from the others in his unique suffering, while the blessed are ceremoniously arrayed in ranks of perfect order, all thinking the same thought and feeling the same feeling. The variety that Santayana so delights in, he recognizes, might be just so many ways of being wrong.

Rarer even than the richness and subtlety of Santayana's mind is the humility which ac-

knowledges that his most cherished thoughts might have missed the mark on the question that matters most. Having pressed reason as far as it can go, he reasonably recognizes that reason alone might be insufficient to understand the human place in the universe. Philosophical brilliance may not be the one thing needful, as ordinary men tend to realize more readily than those possessed of extraordinary intellect; not often does one find a philosopher saying, even if just in passing, that there could be human powers more crucial to understanding than those of pure mind. It is a measure of Santayana's reverence for the truth that he allows that his own thought might never have grasped it. To borrow a phrase from his favorite James brother, Henry, Santayana was one of those on whom nothing is lost; and he shows more fully than any other 20th-century philosopher what man might be, although by his own admission he may not have the last word on what man is.

Algis Valiunas is a literary journalist and the author of Churchill's Military Histories (Rowman & Littlefield).

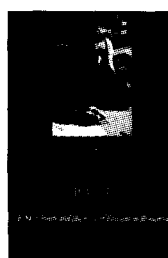
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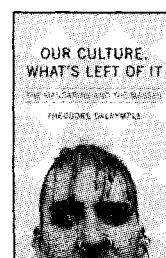
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BOOKS IN BRIEF

Greatness: Reagan, Churchill & the Making of Extraordinary Leaders, by Steven F. Hayward.
Crown Forum, 194 pages, \$22

What is political greatness? Is it still possible in these egalitarian times? Were Winston Churchill and Ronald Reagan great statesmen? If so, how so? In *Greatness*, Steven Hayward responds briskly, engagingly, and respectfully: Read Aristotle; Yes; Yes; and Glad you asked.

Applied to the life and times and statesmanship of Churchill and Reagan, *Greatness* is, in effect, an extended essay answering Leo Strauss's frequently quoted charge to his students on the occasion of Churchill's death: "We have no higher duty, and no more pressing duty, than to remind ourselves and our students, of political greatness, human greatness, of the peaks of human excellence."

As usual, Hayward leaps to his subject with zest and writes with verve, proceeding from surface similarities to important differences to "the fundamental traits of statesmanship" that made each man great in his own way and time. Against the various familiar hangdog intellectual trends that reduce human beings to "corks bobbing on the waves of history," Hayward offers the noble words and deeds of Churchill and Reagan as anecdotal proof—is there any other kind available?—of the permanent possibility of heroic achievement.

It was worthwhile for Hayward to divert himself from his larger work (his two-volume biography of Reagan) to give us this one. Like its heroes, *Greatness* lifts the spirits and makes the world look fresh again.

—Christopher Flannery



Our Culture, What's Left of It: The Mandarins and the Masses, by Theodore Dalrymple.
Ivan R. Dee, 356 pages, \$27.50

In his plaintively titled new collection of essays, *Our Culture, What's Left of It*, Theodore Dalrymple, an English physician and journalist, writes, "The problem with upholding virtue and denouncing vice without appearing priggish, killjoy, bigoted, and narrow-minded has become so acute that intellectuals are now inclined either to deny that there is a distinction between the two or to invert their value." The intellectual villains he has in mind are D.H.

Lawrence, Virginia Woolf, Joan Miró, and Karl Marx, each of whom gets strung out on the rack of Dalrymple's pithy prose.

The problem with *Our Culture* is that so many of these portraits turn out to be caricatures (one of Dalrymple's heroes is the 19th-century English cartoonist James Gillray). When he writes about Lawrence or Woolf, Dalrymple focuses exclusively on their worst books with nary a mention of their masterpieces, *Women in Love* and *To the Lighthouse*. Of course, Lawrence's *Lady Chatterly's Lover* was a provocative, poorly written novel that unleashed an endless stream of smut, but the same could be said of James Joyce's vastly superior *Ulysses*. Can conservatism actively nurture aesthetic experimentation or is its role limited to passively preserving great works once they've entered the canon? Mr. Dalrymple hovers around this question, but he never adequately answers it.

When he writes more generally about the depravity of our time—teenage prostitution, serial killers, hooliganism—Dalrymple treats it as if it were a unique outgrowth of Western culture. He is more persuasive about the negative side effects of many so-called "humane" European social policies, but his intention seems to be more to arouse our indignation than encourage any thoughtful realignment of values. Moral pessimism may be a perfectly valid response to modernity, but too often Dalrymple's essays are dogged by the same intellectual complacency he is so quick to sniff out in others.

—Thomas Meaney



Democracy and Populism: Fear and Hatred, by John Lukacs. Yale University Press,
256 pages, \$25 (cloth), \$16 (paper)

Profoundly illuminating and deeply infuriating at the same time, John Lukacs's latest book will alternately attract and repel thoughtful conservative readers. Taking Tocqueville and Churchill as his guides, Lukacs brings a humane European conservative sensibility to bear on the tragedy of the 20th century and on our present discontents.

Lukacs's book recovers fundamental distinctions between conservatism and populism, patriotism and nationalism, and fascism and every genuine form of conservatism. But the

book is marred by his tendency to confuse pronouncements with reasoned argument. He refuses even to consider the possibility that the liberal nation-state is the only available political vehicle for patriotism in the contemporary world. His ever more insistent anti-anti-Communism knows no bounds (he perversely confuses Stalin, the partisan of nihilistic Soviet modernity, with Russian nationalism *tout court*). And he implausibly insists that George W. Bush went to war in Iraq "for the main purpose of being popular." The book thus reveals the two faces of John Lukacs: the wise moralist and historian, and the cantankerous polemicist who rejects nearly everything about contemporary American conservatism.

—Daniel Mahoney
Assumption College



Thomas Paine and the Promise of America, by Harvey J. Kaye. Hill & Wang, 336 pages,
\$25 (cloth), \$14 (paper)

Harvey Kaye, a professor of Social Change and Development at the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay, explores the life and especially the long-term political significance of the author of *Common Sense*, *The Rights of Man*, and *The Age of Reason*. Kaye's point is that Thomas Paine, though often relegated to the founding generation's lower ranks, was in fact highly consequential, serving as an inspiration for "progressives" ranging from abolitionists to suffragettes to socialists to Franklin D. Roosevelt. Kaye believes Paine could be the Left's hero once again, even though nefarious conservatives like Ronald Reagan have more recently tried to appropriate him.

Conservatives long shied away from Paine. In the dispute between Paine and Edmund Burke over the French Revolution, they took Burke's side. Paine had difficulty coming to grips with the fundamentally totalitarian character of egalitarian, secular utopianism (at least until he was imprisoned by Robespierre).

But Kaye undercuts his own argument by noting Paine's eclecticism and the difficulties in categorizing him. Just as Jefferson was revered by both Lincoln and the Confederates, and by both FDR and Reagan, Paine offers something for everyone. His attachment to natural rights, his affection for commerce and

free markets, his disdain for centralized power, and his eagerness to take up arms against tyrants hardly puts him in the company of today's Left.

—Andrew E. Busch
Claremont McKenna College



Augustine: A New Biography,
by James J. O'Donnell. HarperCollins,
416 pages, \$26.95 (cloth)

In his "new biography" of Augustine, Georgetown University Provost and classicist James O'Donnell tries to strip the Church Father of his sainthood. For O'Donnell, Augustine was a mendacious autobiographer, an opportunistic cleric, a supercilious human being, a polarizing historian, a dogmatic political philosopher, and a tiresome apologist. He never overcame his Manicheism, and today we are bound to his "binary" mode of thinking. Christendom's insistence upon univocal truth bears the unfortunate imprint of its Augustinian founding. Modernity, too, in its unrelenting pursuit of objectivity, is beholden to Augustine's thought: his spiritual imperialism deforms contemporary political discourse and his mortification of the flesh corrupts our culture.

All of Augustine's arguments (which the book uniformly mistreats) conceal his will to power, O'Donnell charges. Sadly, the author's own assertions attempt to obscure the truth of Augustine's greatness.

—David J. Bobb
Hillsdale College



Queer Wars: The New Gay Right and Its Critics, by Paul Robinson.
University of Chicago Press, 192 pages,
\$25 (cloth), \$18 (paper)

Stanford professor Paul Robinson has written what he calls an introduction to "intellectual gay conservatism," which is "arguably the most important new development in the gay world." *Queer Wars* examines the movement through four of its most public, prolific, and allegedly conservative intellectual voices: Bruce Bawer ("enthusiastic" 1992 Clinton voter), Gabriel Rotello ("I'm pro-choice, anti-war, pro-feminist, anti-racist, pro-environment, anti-death penalty, and...pro-sex"), Michelangelo Signorile (whose mission is "converting people

from that nasty, vicious, perverted and insane right-wing agenda to a more fun, fabulous and enlightened one"), and the more genuinely conservative Andrew Sullivan.

They have one thing in common: they're all enemies of the radical "queer activists" who see the gay world as one of perpetual victimization in which "queers" must band together to fight common enemies on their right—and everyone is to their right. Unfortunately, this point of view limits the book's discussion, and so this isn't really a book about gay conservatives, or the arguments and energy they bring to the broader gay (not to mention conservative) movement. Robinson's analysis of the battles between his subjects and their detractors over sexual politics and the nature of gender identity is well done, but you won't find significant discussion of Sullivan's support for the Iraq war, for instance, or literary critic Bawer's poetry. Their often poignant writings have been reduced to a caricature—all sex, gender, and campus politics.

—Brandon Michael Brod



The Progressive Revolution in Politics and Political Science: Transforming the American Regime,
edited by John Marini and Ken Masugi.
Rowman & Littlefield, 400 pages,
\$70 (cloth), \$27.95 (paper)

Edited by Claremont Institute senior fellows John Marini and Ken Masugi, *The Progressive Revolution in Politics and Political Science* brings together eleven essays to explain the conflict between classic natural right and historicism that has been at the core of the Western philosophical tradition, and which plays itself out in an American context as the conflict between our country's founding principles and the modern administrative state. Incisive essays by Will Morrissey, Peter Meyers, Scot Zentner, Paul Carrese, and John West show both the intellectual foundation of Progressivism and the institutional changes required by it, while allowing Teddy Roosevelt, Woodrow Wilson, and other Progressives to present their own justifications for replacing the Constitution with the State, and politics with administration. Larry Peterman highlights the incorporation of Progressive ideas into the universities in a chapter aptly titled, "Aimless Theorizing: The Progressive Legacy for Political Science." Thomas West shows how Progressivism has undermined and replaced much of the American constitutional order, and Edward Erler contrasts the constitu-

tional jurisprudence of Chief Justice Marshall with the living constitutionalism of modern jurisprudence. Eric Claeys and Tiffany Jones bring these lessons up to date by exposing the Progressive influence on modern zoning policies and campaign finance reform. And John Marini, who perhaps more than anyone has plumbed the depths of Progressive thought and found its source in Hegelian historicism, provides a breathtakingly accurate account of the Progressive transformation of the American mind.

—Thomas L. Krannawitter
Hillsdale College



Black Rednecks and White Liberals,
by Thomas Sowell. Encounter Books,
355 pages, \$25.95

Through mastery of his subject, meticulous destruction of popular shibboleths, and bracing discussion of so much that is taboo in modern America, Thomas Sowell has cemented his reputation as one of America's leading public intellectuals. His latest offering, *Black Rednecks and White Liberals*, presents six cogent, painstakingly researched essays in which the author seeks "to expose some of the more blatant misconceptions poisoning race relations in our time."

The book's title essay tries to establish a linkage between the ghetto subculture of inner-city blacks and the so-called "redneck" culture brought to America by its earliest immigrants from the English borderlands, the Scottish highlands, and Ulster County, Ireland. Another essay challenges the notion that Nazism was an inevitable function of German civilization. But Sowell is at his sharpest, and most poignant, when probing the stubborn racial gap in American education. "This cannot be explained away by poverty, racism, or innate inferiority," he writes. Sowell chooses instead to stress cultural pathologies. He regrets that so few Americans have the stomach for such debates. "Whites walk on eggshells for fear of being called racists, while many blacks are preoccupied with protecting the image of black students, rather than protecting their future by telling the blunt truth."

Luckily for us, "telling the blunt truth" is a reliable hallmark of Sowell's work. Equally at ease as economist, historian, and cultural archaeologist, he keenly—and unapologetically—explores why various racial and ethnic groups have prospered while others have lagged behind.

—Duncan Currie
The Weekly Standard



Book Review by Carnes Lord

MODERN VIRTUE?

Duty Bound: Responsibility and American Public Life, by Mark Blitz.
Rowman & Littlefield, 192 pages, \$65 (cloth), \$22.95 (paper)

NEAR THE BEGINNING OF THIS ORIGINAL and thought-provoking study, Mark Blitz admits:

Whatever good things we may say about responsibility, we also should recognize what is dull and ponderous about it. Who wants to spend the weekend with someone famous for his responsibility? Being responsible means not having fun. Acting responsibly means not doing as you would like. Responsibility is a sober characteristic that we all may grudgingly respect but that only a teenager's father could love.

He is right about that. (And I say this as the father of two teenagers.) This book will not be everyone's cup of tea. Blitz makes occasional valiant stabs at humor and sharp contemporary reference, but the overall tone is sober, measured, carefully reasoned, austere abstract—in short, *responsible*. Yet it fully repays a patient reading. *Duty Bound* is replete with arresting insights and makes an argument that is an important one in our current political environment, where wrangles over an unpopular foreign war and nominations to the Supreme Court, among other things, not infrequently seem to reach new heights of partisan irresponsibility.

The word "responsibility" is one that trips unthinkingly off our tongues, as if it were a natural and universal phenomenon. In fact, according to Blitz, it is peculiar to modernity, or more specifically, to liberal modernity. (Not coincidentally, the word itself first occurs around the time of the American Founding, appearing notably in *The Federalist*.) Responsibility, as the "twin of liberty," is a virtue that can be understood only in the context of a liberal democratic society based on the principles of freedom and equal rights. Responsible behavior is behavior freely chosen, not imposed, and as if it were negotiated with one's sovereign equals, rather than being prescribed by traditional hierarchical codes or structures. As such, Blitz explains, "responsibility is the defining element of liberal character, and liberal democracy works best when responsibility flourishes." It is the liberal "virtue" *par excellence*.

This is an unconventional work. Some will no doubt find bewildering Blitz's melding of philosophical reflections with discussions of very contemporary and practical issues, so it is

worth dwelling momentarily on his method or approach. As he indicates at the outset, he follows less a single methodology than a variety of approaches, sometimes beginning from "ordinary opinion" to seek the roots of our current ideas, sometimes from current issues or concerns to seek what explains them, sometimes from institutions so as to find the "general forms" that organize them in the overall context of liberal democracy. All of this can be understood as an attempt to lay out what might be called a phenomenology of responsibility. At the same time, Blitz admits that his approach is importantly shaped by categories deriving from classical philosophy, such as "form," "cause," and the like, and more particularly, that his understanding of the link between goals, characters, and institutions is shaped by the Platonic-Aristotelian notion of "regime." Indeed, he goes so far as to say that parts of the book are, "as it were, studies in Platonic political science." This is bold in several senses. Readers may find it frustrating that Blitz doesn't spend more time articulating these starting points of his analysis, or explaining why they are to be preferred to a more contemporary understanding. At his best, though, it has to be said that Blitz's imitations of Platonic-style dialectical inquiry are dazzling.

This is true particularly of the book's opening discussion of responsibility and "modern virtue" more generally. Blitz distinguishes modern virtue from virtue in its classical (Greek and Roman) form (and implicitly from religiously-inspired virtue) by its largely instrumental character, its accessibility to all without the need of what Aristotle calls "equipment" necessary for its exercise (such as wealth), the absence of support for it in the passions, its lack of dependence on "prudence" in the Aristotelian sense to be fully effective, and finally, its lack of connection to human excellence or nobility. The four cardinal virtues of modernity turn out to be "niceness," tolerance, industry, and responsibility. Blitz's respectful yet ultimately merciless probing of the contemporary manifestations of these various qualities rings many bells; but it is also apt to leave readers with the depressing feeling that modern virtue is a long way from the real thing, and to make them wonder whether such thin gruel can really sustain liberal democratic societies in the face of the many challenges confronting them today.

Blitz's account of the virtue of responsibility is novel in two ways. The term "responsibility" in current American usage clearly has several nuances, but its core meaning seems to revolve around the notion of individual accountability for actions caused. Blitz, by contrast, emphasizes the link between responsibility and the reliable and successful accomplishment of tasks, and more critically, the link between responsibility and the accomplishment of "tasks that seem to belong to no one in particular, situations where no one is obviously accountable and circumstances that no one seems to have caused." Responsibility so understood is inseparable from an individual's self-interest, i.e., it is never simply altruistic; but neither is it simply a form of selfish calculation. Not everyone will be equally responsible. Rather, some individuals will continually broaden and strengthen their sense of responsibility—enlarging it from private to common tasks—and thereby eventually enter the political arena. The fully responsible man, Blitz writes, "clearly opens in the direction of pride and nobility and needs to exercise more than ordinary fairness"—that is, he approaches virtue as classically understood. At the end of the day, however, modern politicians "typically act in situations where the common benefit is also a more or less identical individual benefit to them, rather than acting because ruling a common enterprise is their own characteristic natural field and place."

BLITZ'S EXTENDED DISCUSSION OF RESPONSIBILITY in politics is subtle and rich. Its key point is that there is a fundamental difference between "the spirit of narrow, immediate, rule-based, guilt-fearing accountability" and political responsibility in the true sense. Political responsibility is shared by bureaucrats, executives, and legislators. Blitz does not sharply distinguish between the (administrative) responsibility of bureaucrats and the (political) responsibility of politically-appointed executives; indeed, he properly stresses the essentially political nature of government altogether, and the large scope of action available to the bureaucracy. In a striking passage that undoubtedly reflects his own experience as a senior U.S. government official some decades ago, he says that

administrations and bureaucracies that work well are headed by those alive to the



undefined substance of their tasks. To serve in government is to be constantly amazed by how much is there for the taking, how little anyone knows about what should be done or who should do it. An executive agency with a confident head can accomplish things in areas where it hardly seems to belong. Risk and enterprise, shaping situations, shifting and defining terms of debate, seeing others' viewpoints as mere hills and valleys in a landscape of one's own design—these are the characteristics of an executive who does his job.

But Blitz also insists that executive "enterprise" is insufficient, and indeed potentially dangerous, in the absence of the checking and balancing of a popular legislature dedicated to "compromise" or the engineering of popular consent. The full meaning of responsibility properly understood thus reflects the institutional structure of liberal constitutionalism, or at any rate its American incarnation.

Blitz further pursues the issue of executive leadership in a brief discussion of responsibility and foreign affairs. Contemporary American presidents, he argues, though they may err through excessive application of "realist" or "moralist" courses of action abroad, have as it were internalized the sense of responsible action promoted by our constitutional structure, and thus do not indulge in the "wild adventurism" or tyrannical actions of many leaders in the premodern past—contrary to what domestic critics have alleged against, for example, Ronald Reagan, and more recently George W. Bush. Blitz's discussion of "responsible directions" in American foreign policy reads very much like a vindication of Bush in particular from such charges (with the exception perhaps of the argument for a strengthened role for Congress in foreign affairs). He opposes ceding American sovereignty to international bodies, supports "responsible intervention in areas beyond our immediate interests," favors a strong defense, and holds that promoting democratic responsibility in others is in our own interest (noting that it "may seem to foster but actually restricts our potential arrogance").

WHAT THEN IS THE RESPONSIBILITY scorecard in America today? Blitz sometimes gives the impression that liberal responsibility is a byproduct of American political institutions, and ultimately of our wise Constitution, and hence that the country is after all in reasonably good shape. But this is not really what he wants to say. He makes it clear that responsibility must be supported by "public and educated opinion," and that institutional checks and balances alone cannot produce it.

Yet when he shifts focus in the remainder of the book from the political arena proper to other institutions or professions central in American public life and in the molding of public opinion, the overall message is of a seemingly inexorable erosion in the underpinnings of American responsibility. In surveying the current state of the courts and lawyers, the media, philanthropy, and higher education in America, Blitz delivers himself of a muted yet scathing indictment of these institutions that generally echoes widespread conservative criticisms.

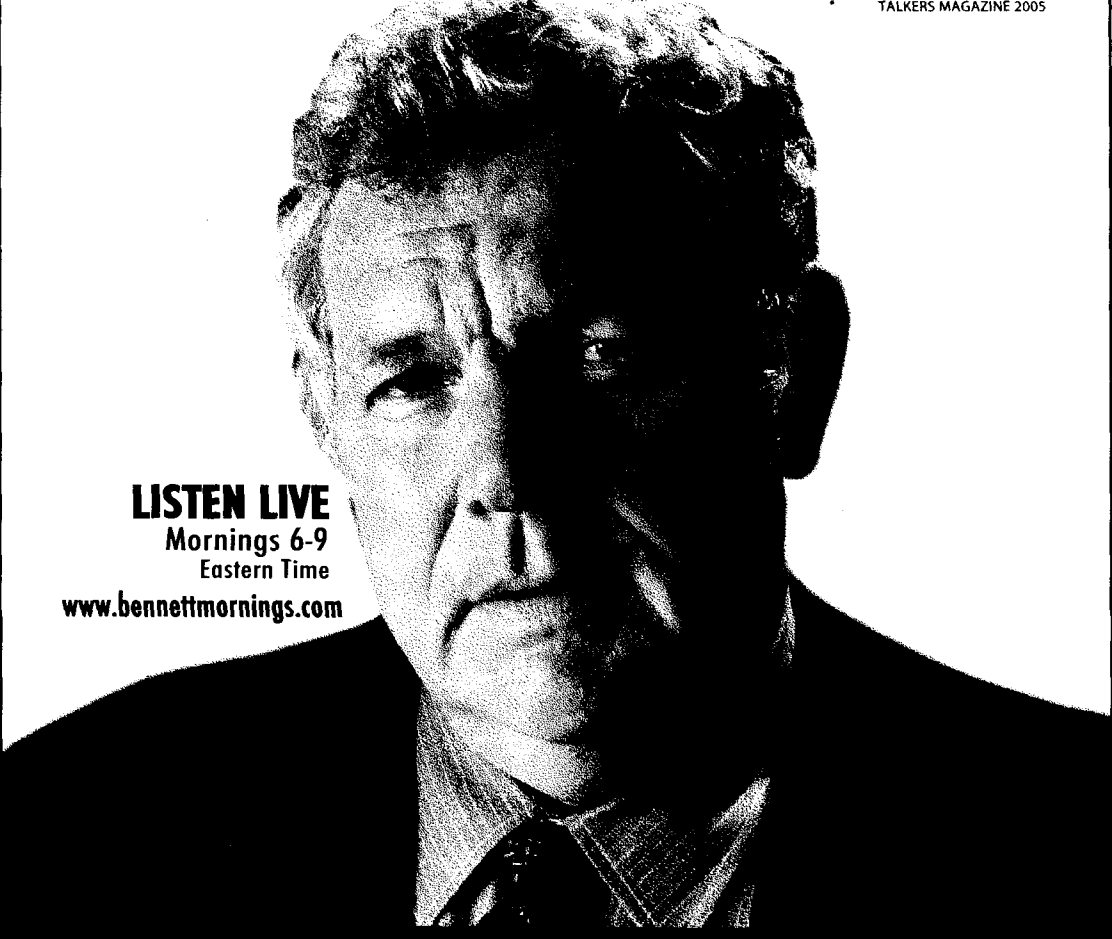
At the end of the day, it is difficult not to feel that Blitz is overly sanguine about the state of liberal responsibility, or the potency of responsibility understood as a liberal virtue. The title of his book notwithstanding, Blitz hardly ever mentions "duty," and he does not consider whether or to what extent liberal responsibil-

ity might be fortified by the remnants of older moral traditions and practices. Thus he is less than convincing in tracing a natural "progression" in "responsible" Americans from self-serving calculation to a devotion to common tasks or the common good. It is plausible to suppose that simple patriotism plays a significant role in motivating our political class; and the strength of the growing religious orientation of the country—unique among the advanced democracies—is another factor that would have to be taken into account. But that would be another book—one that Blitz himself would be eminently qualified to write.

Carnes Lord is professor of naval and military strategy at the U.S. Naval War College and author of The Modern Prince: What Leaders Need to Know (Yale University Press).

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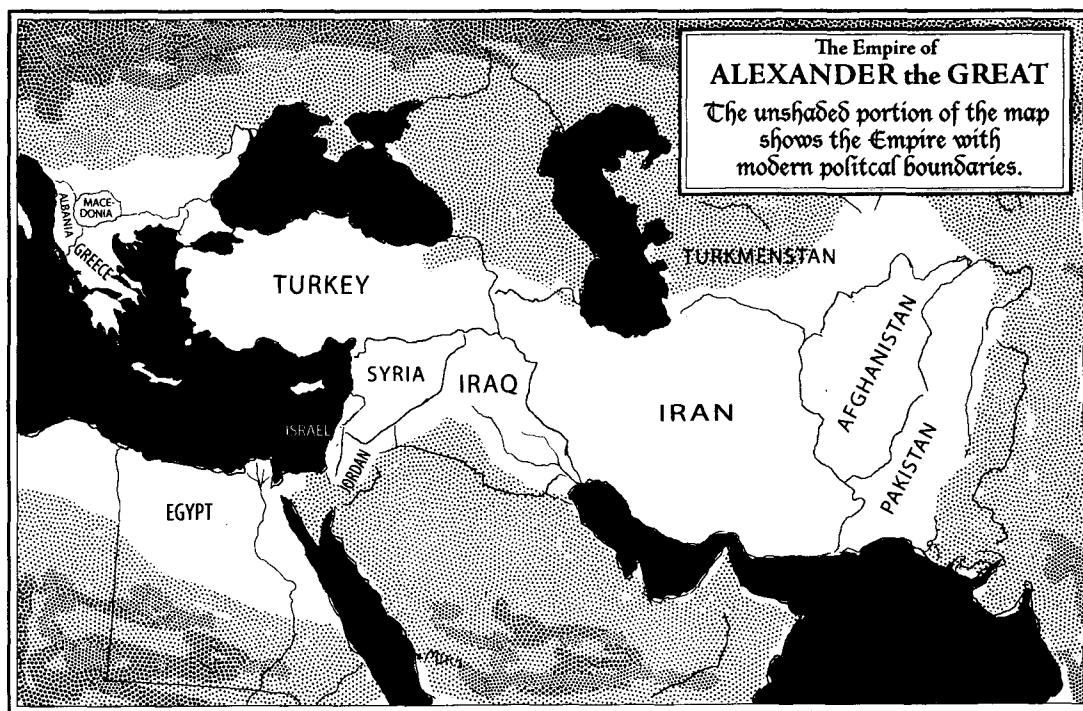

Book Review by Thomas R. Martin

ANCIENT GREATNESS

Alexander: Destiny and Myth, by Claude Mossé, translated by Janet Lloyd.
Johns Hopkins University Press, 256 pages, \$58 (cloth), \$21.95 (paper)

Alexander the Great: The Hunt for a New Past, by Paul Cartledge.
Overlook Press, 352 pages, \$28.95

Alexander the Conqueror: The Epic Story of the Warrior King, by Laura Foreman.
Da Capo Press, 211 pages, \$35



PUBLISHING BOOKS ABOUT ALEXANDER the Great is an industry that shows no signs of diminishing. These three books make diverse contributions to the huge library of modern works about Alexander, but each, in different ways, illustrates how challenging it is to make judgments about “great men” which will stand the test of time.

Claude Mossé, emerita professor at the University of Paris, VIII, spends three of the five sections of *Alexander: Destiny and Myth* (originally published in French in 2001) sketching Alexander’s career and personality, but she is much more interested in exploring the “myth of Alexander.” She writes:

[I]t seems that nowadays any idea of a comprehensive interpretation of this figure has been rejected [by historians].... They refrain from passing value judgments on the man, and try instead to weigh up the consequences of his brief reign, in particular with regard to the evolution of the concept of royalty and

the creation of a new form of monarchy in the states that emerged from Alexander’s conquest.... However, if historians have given up attempting to fathom Alexander’s real intentions or judging the man’s qualities, novelists have stepped in to replace them.

Mossé’s study then turns from history to the novels written about Alexander. For her, “the essential question remains: did Alexander really change the course of history?” The answer is diffuse. Alexander’s reign introduced a new form of political power into the eastern Mediterranean—personal monarchy—and it set in motion “cultural syncretisms which are impossible to ignore and without which it would be hard to understand the ideological and religious ferment of the end of the first millennium A.D.” Yet what Mossé desires, finally, is “a new approach to history, one that takes the imaginary into account, along with its place in the evolution of societies.” She does not offer specifics on how imaginary history might be carried out.

Paul Cartledge, professor of Greek History at Cambridge University, is well known for his scholarship on ancient Sparta. He writes his wide-ranging book for general readers as well as scholars; it offers comprehensive treatment of Alexander’s life, conquests, personality, and legacy. Cartledge expertly explains how hard it is to determine what we really know about Alexander: none of the surviving sources is remotely contemporary, and they frequently disagree. For example, we have five different versions of how Callisthenes died—Callisthenes, the official historian of Alexander! Cartledge’s appendix, “Sources of Paradox,” explains the source problems, and, as he suggests in his preface, readers might well start by reading this first.

The interpretative theme of *Alexander the Great: The Hunt for a New Past* is Alexander’s devotion to hunting, which Cartledge calls the most important of the “keys to unlocking the enigma that was Alexander.” As unlocked in his chapter on “Alexander the Man,” the riddle reveals an obsessively violent Alexander:



From all the evidence a consistent picture emerges of an Alexander passionately attached, almost addicted, to the thrills and spills of the chase. Butchering wild animals was by no means irrelevant to the career of a man moved on more than one occasion to treat “untamed” human enemies, such as the Cossaeans in 324/3, with unrestrained savagery.

Since this “consistent picture” implies a deeply negative judgment on Alexander, it seems inconsistent with Cartledge’s conclusion in this same chapter. He says that his own view of Alexander “falls somewhere between” negative and positive and “takes account of Lord Acton’s dictum that ‘Power tends to corrupt, and absolute power corrupts absolutely.’” Praising Mossé’s “finely balanced judgment” in her own book, he quotes from her chapters on “Alexander the Man”:

‘He was no doubt neither the political and military genius that some have described nor the sage who derived total self-control from Aristotle’s teaching. Nor was he the drunkard incapable of mastering his temper, nor the ‘savage’ barbarian who razed Thebes and burned down Persepolis. He was a man of his times....’

Cartledge concurs, then, with Mossé’s view that we should in the end “judge Alexander by his achievements and by the evolution of the empire that he conquered in just over one decade.”

IT IS CONFUSING TO SEE A JUDGMENT BASED largely on what Alexander was *not*, especially when its “balance” is at odds with its criticism of his “unrestrained savagery.” The explicit connection Cartledge establishes between his Alexander and Mossé’s, however, leads me to the book’s most puzzling aspect: his response to the now much-discussed question of Alexander’s sexuality. In his foreword to Mossé’s book, Cartledge raises this issue in the context of the two novels about Alexander that Mossé tackles, one by Klaus Mann from 1929 and one by Valerio Massimo Manfredi from the late 1990s. Cartledge expresses astonishment that in his recent novel Manfredi

really did overlook or omit to mention any kind of sexual activity by Alexander other than heterosexual encounters with physically mature females. But, as Mossé clearly implies, it beggars the imagination to suppose that in reality Alexander never had sex with anyone of his own gender, or with an immature male, and on [Klaus]

Mann’s part, as she states, ‘the choice of a particular kind of sexuality is definitely made’—his [novelistic] Alexander is a preferred homosexual. Strangely, and in a way sadly, it is the straight Manfredi version, not the countercultural Mann version, that is coming very slowly towards a cinema screen near you, courtesy of Dino de Laurentis and Baz Luhrmann. Those with fond memories of Hollywood’s homosexually inclined ‘beefcake’ movies of the 1950s—when the last major movie of Alexander was made [Cartledge wrote these remarks in 2003, before the release of Oliver Stone’s *Alexander* in 2004]—are in for a bitter disappointment.

To tell the truth, I can’t figure out why it is strange or sad that de Laurentis and Luhrmann are not making a homosexually inclined beefcake movie about Alexander. More importantly, I can’t understand the claim about what Mossé “clearly implies.” Nowhere does she even hint that Alexander had a homoerotic relationship with his close friend Hephaestion, nor does she discuss the eunuch Bagoas (concerning both of whom, more shortly). In fact, she discusses homosexuality at all only in her section on Mann’s novel. Like the ancient sources, Mossé evidently did not think that defining Alexander’s sexuality was a task worth much attention—as opposed to explaining what his sex life might reveal about the state of his self-control, a question they thought very significant.

My best guess is that Cartledge’s puzzling remarks about Alexander and homosexuality are related to the distinctly modern, indeed, hip tone of his book, which he explains is “distantly based” on his lectures for undergraduates in Britain. Consider, for example, the quotation (from Tom Holt’s novel about Alexander) with which Cartledge chooses to open his chapter on Alexander’s conquest of Persia: “As is tolerably well known by now, Alexander had no sex-life whatsoever and my theory is that he got his fun doing to countries what normal people do to women, cities being the tangible outcome.” Since Cartledge elsewhere explains to readers that Holt’s novel is “comic and absurdist...even trivializing,” what are they supposed to make of Holt’s mocking implication that “normal,” i.e., heterosexual, relations amount to promiscuity or even rape?

The situation becomes murkier still with Cartledge’s conclusion that “almost certainly” Alexander and “the slightly older Hephaestion” had a sexual relationship, at least during the pair’s adolescence and perhaps even early adulthood. He insists, “Efforts to expunge all trace, or taint, of homosexuality from their relationship are in any case seriously misguided.” He justifies this conclusion, first, by comparing

it to the relationship between the close friends Achilles and Patroclus of Trojan War fame—even though, as he says, Homer does not make them lovers, and the first claim that they had sex comes 300 years after Homer, in Greek tragedy (which made a business of reworking Homer’s stories). Given Cartledge’s emphasis on being sensitive to the nature of sources, it seems odd to prefer the much later tradition about Achilles and Patroclus.

CARTLEDGE’S SECOND JUSTIFICATION for believing that “the love between [Alexander and Hephaestion] was physically expressed” is potentially more confusing:

The point is that in classical Greece homoeroticism among males during adolescence was considered perfectly compatible with an actively heterosexual adult lifestyle later on. Nor was there any stigma of a religious or other nature attaching to homosexuality in itself: what mattered was how it was expressed, with whom, and in what contexts.

This is correct, but perhaps more should be said, especially given the modern preoccupation with Alexander’s sexuality (as in the furor that erupted, most notably in Greece, over his depiction in Oliver Stone’s movie). For one thing, there was no consensus about the legitimacy of male homoeroticism in classical Greece—some city-states accepted it, and some did not. The best evidence I know for its ambiguous evaluation in Greek society is Xenophon’s explicit denial, against the other evidence, that close friendship between Spartan men ever included sex. Furthermore, the homoeroticism that was acceptable in some places was, as Cartledge says, governed by strict rules of propriety. To be acceptable, sex between men could take place only between an older male (the “lover,” in the Greek terminology for this kind of relationship) and a younger, adolescent male (the “beloved”). Sex between men of roughly the same age did not meet this standard of acceptability. For this reason, an actively sexual relationship between Alexander and Hephaestion would not have been acceptable by Greek standards of the times. Cartledge’s conclusion about Alexander’s relationship with his closest friend therefore does not fit with his judgment, echoed from Mossé, that Alexander was “a man of his times.”

None of this is to deny that there is ancient evidence that Alexander had homoerotic relations with an adolescent male. The evidence, however, concerns not Hephaestion but rather the young eunuch Bagoas, whom Alexander

was given as a gift (i.e., as a slave). Plutarch calls Bagoas Alexander's "beloved," probably based on a story from Dicaearchus, a contemporary source now lost. The novelist Mary Renault made Bagoas a central figure in one of her novels about Alexander, but this slave eunuch is remarkably little discussed in Cartledge's book (as in most modern books on Alexander), compared to the emphasis on Hephaestion. I can't help wondering if this imbalance doesn't reflect the modern sensibility that would regard homoerotic sex between Alexander and Hephaestion as acceptable because it would have involved free and consenting individuals of more or less the same social standing. Sex between Alexander and Bagoas, by contrast, wouldn't meet modern criteria of acceptability because it would have been perpetrated by a slave owner on a youth, mutilated to preserve his adolescent attractiveness, and who, like other slaves, had no choice whether to consent to sex with his master.

This distorting of Alexander's sex life—foregrounding an unattested homoerotic relationship with Hephaestion instead of an attested relationship with Bagoas—reveals how modern social preoccupations can interfere with the search for historical truth. It's worth pointing out, as none of these books do, that the ancient sources don't criticize Alexander for having sex with Bagoas. What they criticize Alexander for is his indulging Bagoas by being violently cruel to people whom his "favorite" disliked. This failing they see as part of the evidence for Al-

exander's falling away from the high standards of self-discipline that they attribute to the king before he became corrupted by his accumulation of power and wealth.

IN THE END, THEN, JUDGING ALEXANDER—which inevitably means making a moral evaluation—is so difficult not just because the surviving sources are late and contradictory, but also because ancient and modern criteria for moral judgment can be so different at important junctures. Where these criteria overlap—more often in the evaluation of personality traits, such as self-control, than in political or social matters, such as conquest or imperial rule—is where we should perhaps look most closely for some common understanding of Alexander's "greatness." A thoughtful definition of those points of intersection ought to be the first requirement of any book judging Alexander.

Laura Foreman, a prolific author and reporter, tries to provide something like that in her *Alexander the Conqueror: The Epic Story of the Warrior King*. As she well says, "Many have failed to navigate the pitfall of judging [Alexander] by the moral standards prevalent in their time, not his." She accordingly enumerates actions of Alexander that many moderns would decry but that most ancients admired. Nevertheless, her overall evaluation of him is decidedly unfavorable, reflecting the most recent trend in Alexander scholarship. She also so readily accepts the modern assumption that Alexander and Hephaes-

tion were lovers that she can remark, "the sexual aspect of their bond was almost incidental to the profound emotional tie that for both was lifelong." As for Bagoas, her only comment strikes an exceptionally modern tone, referring to his relationship with Alexander as an "affair," one that, she adds, did not alter Alexander's relationship with Hephaestion. Her ultimate judgment on Alexander couldn't be more contemporary: "His career proclaimed his essential nature as that of a destroyer, not a creator; in fact, the capacity for destruction was his unique genius."

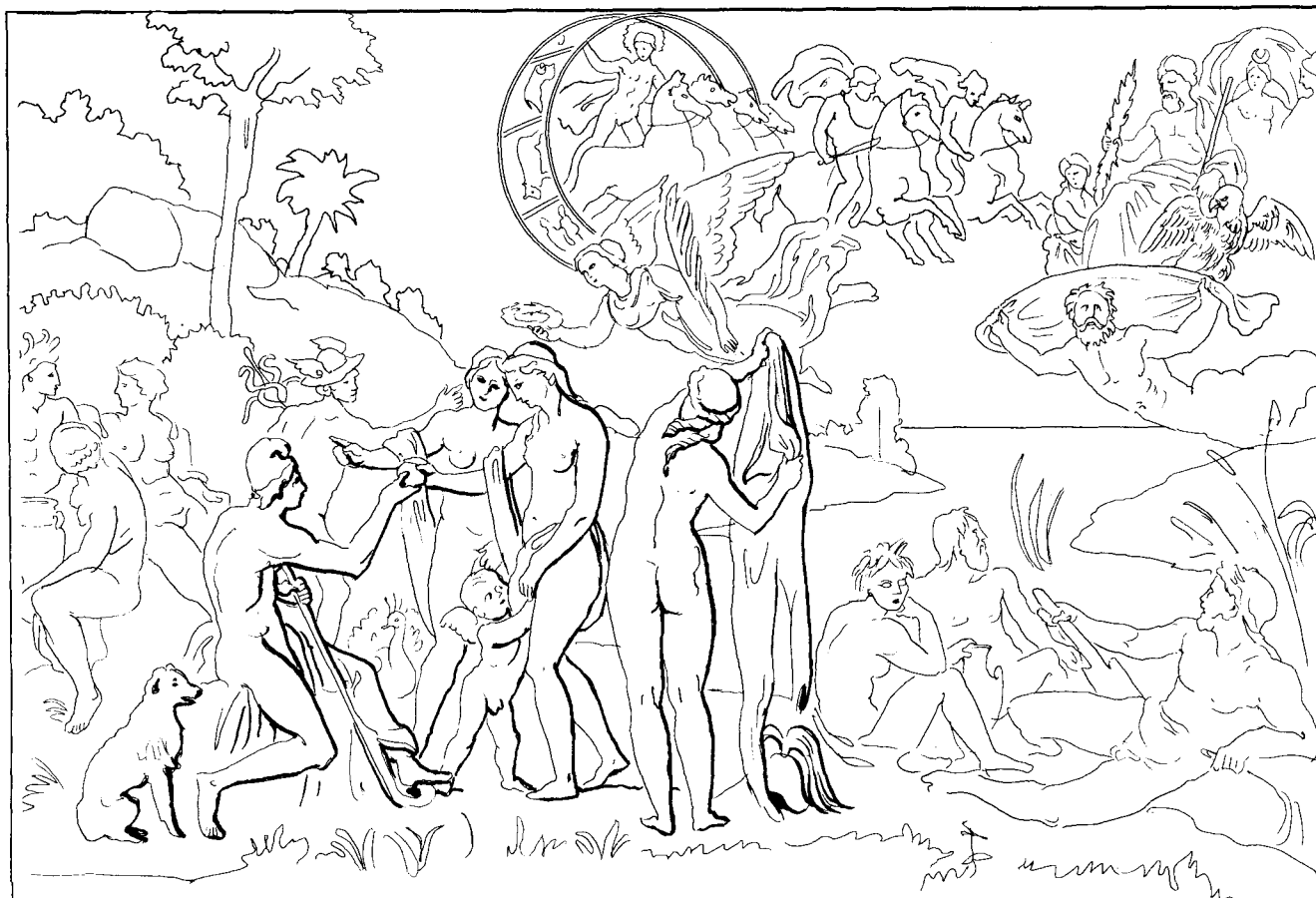
In the end, then, Foreman chooses to leap into the very pitfall that she so astutely warns against, but all the same her book is marvelously (and literally) attractive. Beautiful color photographs enhance every page, showing landscapes, archaeological finds, and book illustrations that illuminate Alexander's career and the many myths that grew from it in later ages. In their vast range of subject and chronology, the pictures in this "coffee table" book do as much as any scholarly argument to help readers grasp the full scope of Alexander's greatness, whether in terms of the vast territories that he conquered, or the inexhaustible treasure house of stories about him—stories generated as myths in antiquity and the middle ages, and as scholarly and non-scholarly books today.

Thomas R. Martin is Jeremiah O'Connor Professor and Chair in the Department of Classics at College of the Holy Cross.

Book Review by Mary Lefkowitz

DIVINE REVELATIONS

The Mirror of the Gods: How Renaissance Artists Rediscovered the Pagan Gods, by Malcolm Bull.
Oxford University Press, 464 pages, \$40



Schematic copy of Marcantonio Raimondi's engraving of the Judgment of Paris, after Raphael (1483-1520). Original is about 12" x 17".

IN A 1524 PRINT BY THE ARTIST MARCANTONIO Raimondi, two nude females stand before a naked young man, his back turned toward the viewer. On his left, several nudes move in the background, while three figures, also in the buff, recline in the right foreground. They seem not to notice a third female nude at the center of the picture who stands with her bare back to the viewer, pulling a cloth over her head.

What are these nudists up to? Because the young man is wearing a Phrygian cap, we recognize him as the Trojan prince Paris. He is deciding which of three goddesses is the most beautiful: Juno (identified by the peacock), Venus (identified by the chubby little Cupid holding her leg), and Minerva, goddess of wisdom (marked by the helmet and shield resting on the ground). The artist indicates that something momentous is happening by showing the sun-god driving his horses through the sky over Minerva's head. To her right, Jupiter sits enthroned in the sky, holding his thunderbolt.

Paris could have chosen Minerva and her gift of wisdom. He might have chosen Juno, who offered political power. But instead he chose Venus, who offered him the most beautiful woman in the world—Helen, the daughter of Jupiter, who was then married to another man. It was a morally disastrous choice that led to Paris' death and the destruction of his city. The story is ancient. In the *Iliad*, the goddesses Athena (known to the Romans as Minerva) and Hera (Juno) never cease to hate the Trojans after Paris chooses Venus because of "his sorrowful lust."

But one can see at a glance that Marcantonio's drawing does not derive directly from an ancient Greek source. The Greeks would have been horrified at the sight of a naked Athena. (The hunter Tiresias went blind after he inadvertently saw her undress.) In depictions of the *Judgment of Paris* on Athenian vase paintings, the three goddesses are fully clothed, each standing in a distinctive costume before Paris, who is dressed in a tunic. There was no need

to use nudity to remind anyone that "sorrowful lust" would lead him to make a wrong decision. Their religion had taught the Greeks that mortals usually make the wrong choice.

It was in Roman art and literature that the theme of sexuality first became explicit. In the ancient novel known as *The Golden Ass*, the hero-narrator Lucius watches an elaborate stage production of the *Judgment*. Each of the familiar figures comes onstage, Paris in his Phrygian costume, Mercury, Juno, Minerva. Then Venus enters, naked except for a thin cloth showing everything to full advantage. That description would have appealed to Roman audiences. The figures of the goddesses can clearly be seen through the fluid drapery in the depiction of the *Judgment* on the Roman sarcophagus that served as a model for Marcantonio's print.

But in his Renaissance version of the scene, the theme of sexuality is even more explicit. Now all the goddesses are nude, and their nakedness is the drawing's focus. They no longer stand at a distance, disengaged from the mortal Paris. Only

an artist who no longer believed in their divinity would have imagined that goddesses could display themselves openly before Paris, gazing into his eyes, as if each were trying to seduce him.

THE ANCIENT GREEKS LOOKED TO THEIR myths for an explanation of why the world was as it was; why justice came slowly if ever; why humans died; why people so often got things wrong. Educated Romans, even when they did not believe literally in the existence of the ancient gods, recognized that the old mythology still had a continuing cultural significance. But for Marcantonio and other artists of the Renaissance, classical mythology had become a way to subvert their own religion and culture. Instead of the chaste Mary in her blue mantle, one could portray luscious ladies, naked and eager for sexual pleasure. Instead of bearded patriarchs and the broken body of Jesus, one could exhibit brawny young males, ready for adventure. While in Christian Europe the Bible's narratives were regarded as historically true, the classical myths were considered imaginary. Artists were free to change or add details, for their own purposes, to these pagan pictorial narratives.

It is this undercutting of tradition that is signified by "the mirror of the gods," the title of Malcolm Bull's book on Renaissance interpretations of classical mythology. The artists of that period used the gods as a looking glass to view aspects of themselves that could not be portrayed in traditional Christian iconography or Biblical stories. The myths also offered dramatic new possibilities for flattering rulers and patrons. At Versailles, the statue group "Apollo Tended by the Nymphs of Thetis" represented the Sun King himself, resting after a day of good works. His throne stood in the Salon d'Apollon, with a ceiling showing the sun-god traveling across the sky.

In his learned and detailed study, Bull, the head of Art History at the Ruskin School of Drawing and Fine Art at the University of Oxford, surveys a wide variety of artistic media. Rather than resort to generalization or theory, he uses one work of art to explain what is going on in another. It is a method that requires close attention, and repays it.

Since Greek was only in the process of being rediscovered, the artists of the Renaissance learned about the myths from Latin texts. These included not only Virgil's *Aeneid* and that most influential of all Latin poems, Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, but also Servius's commentary on the *Aeneid*, and the works of writers on mythology whose names are now almost forgotten, even by classical scholars. But since Renaissance artists could not easily distinguish between Greek and Roman sources, their notion of the ancient world was inevitably anachronistic.

ALTHOUGH TRAVELERS AND NATIVE Italian artists like Marcantonio had some acquaintance with Roman sculpture, they had little access to the vast mythological lexicon of Athenian vase painting and often chose to portray myths that ancient artists preferred to ignore. So far as we can tell, ancient Athenians loved vases with pictures of the goddess Dawn (fully dressed) carrying off young boys. But Renaissance artists (in this respect following Ovid) preferred showing gods in the process of seducing mortal women.

Ancient Athenians would also have been surprised to see that Renaissance artists paid little attention to the patron goddess of Athens. In Greek mythology, the most important gods are Athena (Minerva) and Apollo—not to mention Zeus (Jupiter) and his discontented and contentious sister and wife, Hera (Juno). But the pantheon of the Renaissance is dominated by differ-

ent pairs of gods: Jupiter and Hercules, Venus and Bacchus, and the twins Apollo and Diana.

It's easy to understand why Venus (sex) and Bacchus (drunkenness) are frequent subjects, often seen together. Jupiter's sexual exploits were a constant subject of interest, even in antiquity, and Renaissance artists did not fail to include occasional depictions of his abduction of the young boy Ganymede, who in Athenian art had easily been the most popular of all Zeus' amours. Hercules, the greatest hero of all, is another obvious choice, as a model for soldiers and politicians. Diana seems to have gained new prominence for a similar reason, as a model for accomplished Renaissance women.

By bringing the gods down from Olympus to a human level, the artists succeeded in making them literally, as well as figuratively, a means of interior design and decoration. To that extent, at least, artists preserved some sense of the gods' ancient identity and traditional iconography. Without the Renaissance revival of classical art, classical divinities might be as unfamiliar to us now as the gods of ancient Mesopotamia.

But at the same time, by using the gods as a mirror for human life, by divorcing them from the rituals and beliefs of antiquity, Renaissance artists stripped Jupiter, Apollo, and their fellow immortals of all but their names. The great Renaissance paintings help us to remember the ancient myths, but to misunderstand them as well. To his great credit, Bull never lets the reader forget that we are dealing with a specially constructed antiquity, full of scenes that ancient people would have found hard to recognize.

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A NEW POETIC STANDARD

Inferno, by Dante Alighieri, translated by Anthony Esolen.
The Modern Library, 528 pages, \$27.95

Purgatory, by Dante Alighieri, translated by Anthony Esolen.
The Modern Library, 544 pages, \$24.95

Paradise, by Dante Alighieri, translated by Anthony Esolen.
The Modern Library, 544 pages, \$25.95

THE TRADITION OF AMERICAN TRANSLATIONS of Dante—by Longfellow, Emerson, Singleton, Ciardi, Mandelbaum, Palma, and now the handsome work of Anthony Esolen—is a living history, a sign that Dante has long been a vital part of the American scene. It could be said, with only mild hyperbole, that Dante is well on the way to being naturalized as a genuine American poet. From the multiplying translations of the *Divine Comedy*, one infers that Dante's readership is growing beyond the traditional confines of colleges and high schools. One infers also that translators, who inevitably build on the achievements of their predecessors, view their efforts as a series of experiments or essays toward rendering Dante's celebrated precision of language into English. Translation is not merely converting the original sense of the text into another language; it is the demanding art of coming to terms with one's own language.

I have been teaching Dante in translation to American undergraduates for over 35 years. As a teacher, this is what I look for in a translation of Dante: an English variant of Dante's crisp *volgare*, his vision of Italian as a language not drawn merely from the pure Florentine but from all the dialects of the land; a fairly precise sense of the poetry's literal statements, preserving the roots and possibly the layers of resonances of isolated words and images; a rendition of Dante's technical, philosophical, and theological language; an awareness that Dante often constructs scenes that deliberately echo or prefigure other scenes in the poem; a sense of the shifting modulations of his voice, which avoids the monotony of the elegiac Virgilian style as well as the archaic solemnity of Renaissance epics.

I have long accepted that poetry—the incantations and music of the language—is lost in translation. Dante, himself a translator from the *Roman de la rose*, believed that translating poetry ends up only in a partial success. As he put it, "[N]o discourse harmonized with the Muses' bonds can be translated from its own dialect into another without the destruction of

all its sweetness and harmony." My preferences, therefore, are for prose translations (such as the one by the unpretentious John D. Sinclair), where the question of the original rhythm is forfeited *a priori* but the intellectual matter is likely to be preserved. Above all, this allows me to teach Dante—not a translator who thinks Dante's poetry can be bettered.

Anthony Esolen prefaces his translation by tackling the problems of his art. He dismisses in one short paragraph the old shibboleth, *traduttore traditore*, a widely abused, misguided slo-



gan that archly disparages the serious labor of translation as nothing less than a fraud. Behind this old notion there stands a conception of language articulated, among others, by Walter Benjamin. In Benjamin's familiar mystical thesis (put forth in a 1923 introduction to a translation of Baudelaire's poetry), any original Ur-text is a displaced version of a pure language, a *reine Sprache*, which can never be reproduced in ordinary languages. It is precisely this language "that is concealed, intensively, in translation." Upon such a view, as George Steiner, Jacques Derrida, and more recently Umberto Eco have pointed out, there looms the theological shadow of a Sacred Language in relation to which

every translation falls short. Esolen will have none of this, for several reasons.

He grasps that translation is the inner reality of scholarship and of all creative art and culture. Nothing escapes translations, which is to say that all arts are engaged in an endless conversation. Gustave Doré, for instance, translates Dante's poetry into painting, much as Dante translated Giotto's images of, say, St. Francis into the poetry of canto XI of *Paradise*; or the mosaics in the Church of San Vitale in Ravenna into the poetry of canto VI of *Paradise*. Through translations, in fact, we face the challenge of assimilating alien voices and of reading words that are both one's own and yet not one's own. Above all, Esolen rightly understands translation as a total enterprise, which means that translating the *Divine Comedy* is not simply a matter of finding often impossible equivalences between Italian and English. On the contrary, it entails translating the whole cultural context of the poem.

AS THE RICH APPENDICES TO EACH OF the three canticles show, the relevant context includes all of Dante's texts; legal and political documents from the Papal chancery; Old French, Provençal, and Sicilian poetry as well as the poetry of the Sweet New Style; the *Aeneid* and the whole Latin epic tradition; the *Summa Theologiae* and the splendid hymns of St. Thomas Aquinas and the confessional writings of St. Augustine; the Church Fathers; the liturgical prayer books; the mystical and visionary writings of the Benedictines and Cistercians—the vast, encyclopedic array of the West's cultural memory. Esolen's powerful idea of translation pivots on the assumption that to "read" and absorb the discourse of Dante we have to be willing to embrace the deepest roots and aims of his culture and his vision.

And he understands that a genuine poetic translation must come to terms with the central issue of poetry: the music of the original composition. Esolen's introduction makes clear that he understands music in Pythagorean and

Platonic terms as nothing less than philosophy, as the pursuit of justice in one's soul, and as the contemplation of beauty. By virtue of music or philosophy we are able to receive the illumination of harmony, scale the heights of truth, and ascend to what draws us to itself—the divine. The philosophical idea of music (which Dante gets mainly through Boethius and St. Augustine) undergirds Esolen's intensely, passionately theological/philosophical interpretation of the poem. But he understands the double question of music and poetry as a specifically technical problem of translating Dante, of capturing the clear quality of the original sound.

In *De Vulgari Eloquentia* Dante himself defines poetry as "a rhetorical art set to music," and the arresting formula conveys his sense of the necessary tension in a poetic text between rhetorical discipline and the resonances of rhythm. In this treatise he proceeds to give a detailed analysis of the structure of rhythm, metrical patterns, feminine rhymes, subdivisions of stanzas, the arrangement of a *canzone*, levels of style (middle, tragic, and comical), etc. This elaborate attention to the craft of poetry has led many readers of Dante, most notably Ezra Pound and T.S. Eliot, to reflect on how best to approximate in English Dante's *terza rima*, his original rhyming verse form consisting of three lines of eleven syllables. Eliot memorably advises against its English use, mindful that Shelley's *The Triumph of Life* attempted it but failed. Esolen successfully adopts blank verse, which consists of unrhymed lines of iambic pentameter. Occasionally he depends on internal alliterations and resonances. He also uses rhyme or, as he puts it: "If I find a rhyme in my path I will use it, but will not turn things inside out for its sake.... In diction...if Dante turns an intransitive verb into a transitive verb, I attempt to do the same...."

THE PRACTICAL EFFECT OF SUCH A thoughtful procedure is to guarantee the presence of Dante's legendary flexibility and variations. Thanks to Esolen's superb rendition, one can finally delve into the *Divine Comedy* in English and catch the rigor of Dante's style and the polyphonic range of his voice. The unusual success of this translation is due, no doubt, to Esolen's gift as a poet in English. But it is also due to his ear as a critic. It is a pleasure to notice that he regularly catches the subtle echoes linking together deeply different scenes, such as, for instance, the words Francesca speaks in *Inferno* V and the words of Ugolino in *Inferno* XXXIII. On the face of it, Francesca, the heroine of romantic passion who is punished for her moral incontinence, is a far cry from Ugolino, a traitor who has plunged into the abyss of hatred and is caught in the fiery ice of fraud. Yet Dante wants the reader to perceive the invisible moral chain binding them together. And so Ugolino sounds like Francesca as both are made to speak "through my tears." Esolen forges the link between the two characters. He conveys that Ugolino—this is his tragedy—cannot tell the difference between love and hatred, anymore than Francesca can realize the tragic consequences of her love.

Inevitably, one could quibble with some details in the notes and the translations. For instance, the note to *Purgatory* XI, lines 4ff., should mention the allusion to St. Francis's "Canticle of Brother Sun" (a text that Esolen generously includes in Appendix D to *Paradise*). In *Purgatory* VI, line 75 and line 83, on the other hand, Dante uses the same phrase, *l'un l'altro*—each other—the first time to describe the reciprocity of the affection between Virgil and Sordello, and the second time, by contrast, to denounce the reciprocity of violence within

the Italian cities. There is a difference in the two phrases: a reflexive verb is used the second time, in order to stress how reciprocal violence within the body politic ends up being violence against oneself. And finally, in *Paradise* XXIX, line 18, where Dante draws the extraordinary picture of the metaphysics of creation as an overflow of divine love, the verb he uses is *s'aperse*. Esolen's line captures creation's explosion of love: "into new loves burst the Eternal Love." This is a powerful rendition. And yet Dante's verb, *s'aperse*, etymologically from the Latin *ad-pario*, implies a coming to light, as in a woman's childbearing.

To point out such details may seem an act of ingratitude, an ungenerous response to the steadily lavish display of taste, inventiveness, depth, and love in every line of Esolen's translation. But it is not ingratitude. It is another way of saying that serious lapses cannot be imputed to him. Esolen has produced an incomparably good work, which is likely to become the standard poetic translation of the *Divine Comedy* for years to come. He correctly views the poem as the paradigmatically Christian vision and the very voice of Western spirituality. In a future edition, he may wish to list some secondary bibliography in order to allow his readers in the colleges and high schools, and at home, to keep discovering the many other layers that constitute the unending wonder of this extraordinary text.

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INFERNO

CANTO ONE

Lost in a dark wood and threatened by three beasts, Dante is rescued by Virgil, who proposes a journey to the other world.

Midway upon the journey of our life
I found myself in a dark wilderness,
for I had wandered from the straight and true.
How hard a thing it is to tell about, 4
that wilderness so savage, dense, and harsh,
even to think of it renews my fear!
It is so bitter, death is hardly more— 7
but to reveal the good that came to me,
I shall relate the other things I saw.
How I had entered, I can't bring to mind, 10
I was so full of sleep just at that point
when I first left the way of truth behind.
But when I reached the foot of a high hill, 13
right where the valley opened to its end—
the valley that had pierced my heart with fear—
I raised my eyes and saw its shoulders robed 16
with the rays of that wandering light of Heaven
that leads all men aright on every road.
That quieted a bit the dread that stirred 19
trembling within the waters of my heart
all through that night of misery I endured.
And as a man with labored breathing drags 22
his legs out of the water and, ashore,
fixes his eyes upon the dangerous sea,
So too my mind, while still a fugitive, 25
turned back to gaze again upon that pass
which never let a man escape alive.
When I had given my weary body rest, 28
I struck again over the desert slope,
ever the firmer foot the one below,
And look! just where the steeper rise began, 31
a leopard light of foot and quick to lunge,
all covered in a pelt of flecks and spots,
Who stood before my face and would not
leave, 34
but did so check me in the path I trod,
I often turned to go the way I came.
The hour was morning at the break of dawn; 37
the sun was mounting higher with those stars
that shone beside him when the Love Divine
In the beginning made their beauty move, 40
and so they were a cause of hope for me
to get free of that beast of flashy hide—
The waking hour and that sweet time of year; 43
but hope was not so strong that I could stand
bold when a lion stepped before my eyes!
This one seemed to be coming straight for me, 46

his head held high, his hunger hot with
wrath—
seemed to strike tremors in the very air!
Then a she-wolf, whose scrawniness seemed
stuffed 49
with all men's cravings, sluggish with desires,
who had made many live in wretchedness—
So heavily she weighed my spirit down, 52
pressing me by the terror of her glance,
I lost all hope to gain the mountaintop.
And as a gambler, winning with a will, 55
happening on the time when he must lose,
turns all his thoughts to weeping and
despair,
So I by that relentless beast, who came 58
against me step by step, and drove me back
to where the sun is silent evermore.
Now while I stumbled to the deepest wood, 61
before my eyes appeared the form of one
who seemed hoarse, having held his words
so long.
And when I saw him in that endless waste, 64
"Mercy upon me, mercy!" I cried out,
"whatever you are, a shade, or man in truth!"
He answered me: "No man; I *was* a man, 67
and both my parents came from Lombardy,
and Mantua they called their native land.
In the last days of Julius I was born, 70
and lived in Rome under the good Augustus
in the time of the false and cheating gods.
I was a poet, and I sang of how 73
that just son of Anchises came from Troy
when her proud towers and walls were burnt
to dust.
But you, why do you turn back to such pain? 76
Why don't you climb that hill that brings
delight,
the origin and cause of every joy?"
"Then are you—are you Virgil? And that
spring 79
swelling into so rich a stream of verse?"
I answered him, my forehead full of shame.
"Honor and light of every poet, may 82
my long study avail me, and the love
that made me search the volume of your
work.
You are my teacher, my authority; 85
you alone are the one from whom I took
the style whose loveliness has honored me.
See there the beast that makes me turn aside. 88
Save me from her, O man renowned and wise!
She sets the pulses trembling in my veins!"
"It is another journey you must take," 91

replied the poet when he saw me weep,
"if you wish to escape this savage place,
Because this beast that makes you cry for help 94
never lets any pass along her way,
but checks his path until she takes his life.
So vicious is her nature, so ill-bent, 97
she never stuffs her ravenous will enough,
but after feeding hungers all the more.
Many a living soul takes her to wife 100
and many shall, until the Greyhound comes,
he who will make her die in misery.
Not land, not lucre will he feed upon, 103
but wisdom, love, and strength shall be his
meat,
and by the cloth of felt he will be born.
He will bring health to humbled Italy, 106
the land for which the maid Camilla died,
and Nisus, Turnus, and Euryalus.
Through every village he will hunt her down 109
until at last he drives her back to Hell,
whence envy set her loose upon the world.
And so I judge it would be best for you 112
to follow me, and I will be your guide,
leading you out through an eternal place,
Where you will hear the groans of hopeless
men, 115
will look upon the sorrowing souls of old,
crying in torment for the second death;
Then you will look upon those souls content 118
to wait in fire, because they hope someday
to come among the nation of the blessed.
Should you then wish to rise and go to them, 121
another soul will come, worthier than I—
with her I'll leave you when I go my way.
For that great Emperor who reigns above, 124
because I was a rebel to His law,
will not allow me entry to his realm.
Everywhere he commands, from there he rules, 127
there stand his city and his lofty throne.
Happy the man He chooses for His house!"
"Poet," I said to him, "I beg of you, 130
by that same God you never knew, that I
may flee this evil and the worse to come,
Lead me now to the place you tell me of, 133
so I may see Saint Peter's gate, and those
you say are dwelling in such misery."
He set on, and I held my pace behind. 136

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Book Review by Carroll William Westfall

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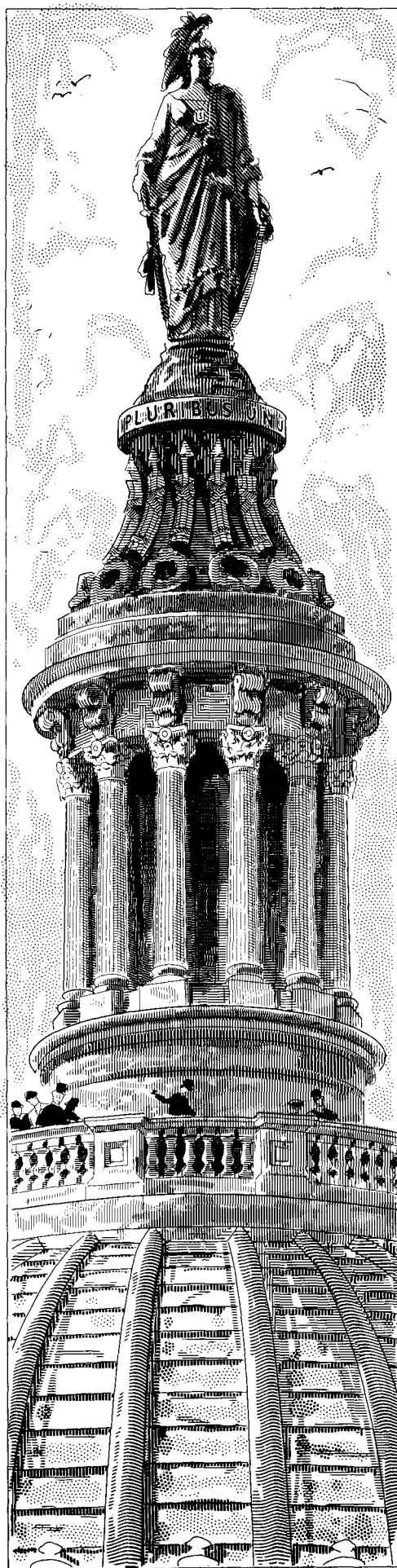
The United States Capitol: Its Architecture and Decoration, by Henry Hope Reed;
principal photography by Anne Day. W.W. Norton, 288 pages, \$50

FOR A HALF CENTURY, HENRY HOPE REED has been an eloquent spokesman for the essential relationship of classical architecture to the American polity. In 1959 he published *The Golden City*, a lavish visual and verbal portrait of America's public and commercial buildings, both important and routine, that he hoped would rally people to their defense against the rising fad of imported architectural modernism. Reed has subsequently expanded on this theme in three books on the nation's great public buildings—the New York Public Library, the Library of Congress (both done in collaboration with others), and now, the Capitol. All three employ ornament to enhance their beauty, and beautiful buildings, argues Reed, enhance citizens' love of their nation.

Reed believes that the appreciation of classical buildings fuels a desire to preserve them and build in their style. He established a program of walking tours of New York City, and in 1968, co-founded a society, Classical America, to cultivate patrons in Washington, D.C., and other great American cities. In addition, Classical America collaborated with W.W. Norton to publish and reprint important books on classical architecture.

In 2002 Classical America merged with the Institute for Classical Architecture, founded a decade earlier in New York by young architects who spurned modernism and embraced *The Golden City*. While this association of classical and traditional architects and artists continues to grow, it remains largely unacknowledged by the architectural establishment. In almost all of the 114 accredited schools of architecture in America, teachers will humiliate any student who challenges the reigning modernism; and critics in the popular press and professional magazines censor non-modernist work. As a result, public building authorities do not know of any alternative to the notion that only modernism is suitable for our time.

In 2005, Reed's leadership in the fight against modernism was acknowledged when he received the first Henry Hope Reed Award recognizing outstanding contributions to the welfare of the traditional city and its architecture. Funded by Richard H. Driehaus of Chicago and administered by the University of Notre Dame, it follows the Driehaus Prize in Classical Architecture (established in 2003) as a



makeweight against the Pritzker Prize, awarded only to modernists.

Reed's new book on the Capitol examines a building rarely mentioned in the prevailing histories of architecture. Those mentioning it fail to admire its rich ornamentation of sculpture and painting—features, in Reed's book, brought to life by the excellent color photographs of Anne Day. This is no mere coffee table book, however; its extensive, lucid text and supplementary material establish the building as an embodiment of America's noblest aspirations.

THE CAPITOL BEGAN AS THE CENTRAL node in Pierre Charles L'Enfant's great 1791 plan for the new federal district. Its design began under the supervision of President Washington and Secretary of State Thomas Jefferson, and its construction lasted until Andrew Jackson's administration. Two of America's best architects of the Federal period, Benjamin Henry Latrobe, an immigrant from England and protégé of Jefferson, and Charles Bulfinch of Boston, were among those who helped elaborate its original plan. In addition, many artists were recruited to depict the drama of America's founding, thus ornamenting the new capitol in the manner of the grand classical tradition.

Largely complete in 1829, the Capitol was the most expensive building built in the United States before mid-century. It made judicious use of familiar European precedents, welding them into a new composition enriched with inventive forms and native ornamental motifs. This surely satisfied the Jeffersonian requirement that in the management of its affairs as in the fine arts, the new nation must win the respect of the old nations of Europe.

Within a generation, the rapidly growing republic required an enlarged building. Out of a competition in 1850 emerged a second construction effort, which led to the placement of Thomas Crawford's statue of *Freedom* atop the dome in 1863 and produced essentially the building that we know today. By retaining but enlarging the dome, and pushing the wings outward to hold new chambers for the House and Senate, the expansion honored the requirement that a public building manifest the continuity and ongoing renewal of a nation's authority to govern.



New attitudes about the relationship between buildings and their settings, and the building's expanded size in an urban landscape, led to the addition of great stairs and temple fronts with sculpted pediments, giving the appearance of a more firmly planted Capitol. The result enriched the first building's probity with the abundance enjoyed by late 19th-century America.

A REMARKABLE CAST OF CHARACTERS steered the remodeling. One was Thomas Ustick Walter, a Philadelphia architect who was perhaps the American best suited to the task. Another was an engineer and graduate of West Point, Lieutenant Montgomery Cunningham Miels. He was building an aqueduct to supply the capital with water when, in 1853, Secretary of War Jefferson Davis appointed him superintendent of the Capitol extension, after President Franklin Pierce moved that responsibility from the Department of the Interior to the War Department. Walter initially welcomed Miels's presence because it allowed him to devote more attention to the architectural work. Miels brought to the building a large amount of cast and wrought iron, which Walter used well for ceilings, window and doorframes, and elsewhere. But when Miels took it upon himself to commission a vast campaign of sculpture and ornamentation throughout the building, Walter was not pleased. Such coolness is common among architects, who often feel that art competes with rather than completes their work. Bramante,

Michelangelo, and Maderno, for instance, did not intend the Basilica of St. Peter to receive the colorful marbles and extensive painting, mosaic, and sculpture installed under Bernini's supervision. In like manner, Palladio would have whitewashed the wonderful frescoes Veronese added to the Villa Barbero at Maser.

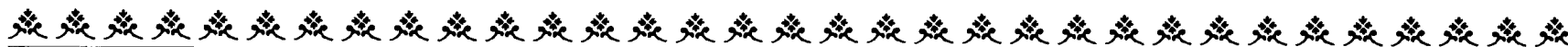
In 1855, Constantine Brumidi applied to provide some mural decoration for the Capitol. A painter born and trained in Rome, Brumidi had previously worked in the Vatican Palace, closely studying Raphael. From 1855 until his death in 1879, Brumidi, with the help of assistants, covered walls and ceilings in the Capitol Rotunda, in corridors, and in room after room with paintings, usually frescoes, in decorative patterns that he, Walter, or both had worked up. Indeed, Walter eventually fell under the painter's spell, finally commissioning him, long after Miels's 1859 departure (in 1861 Lincoln named him Quartermaster General of the Union Army) to paint one of America's great achievements in fresco, the *Apotheosis of Washington*, inside the dome over the rotunda.

Brumidi's paintings and Walter's architecture celebrated abundance and transformed traditional forms. The vegetation (acanthus) of the Corinthian capitals, for example, was enriched with American plants. The ubiquitous columns are carefully calibrated so that their exuberance is relative to the viewer's standpoint and the available light. (As Reed points out, this achievement is rendered largely invisible by artificial illumination.)

The artists' work in the first construction campaign, and the labors of Brumidi and the corps of sculptors, bronze casters, floor tile specialists, and stucco masters in the second, made the building's presentation of America's ideals intelligible to the general public. The temple fronts that adorn the legislative chambers suggest that the activity inside partakes of a sacred character. The great dome rising above the rotunda, decorated with paintings illustrating the narrative of America's settlement, founding, and expansion, links the civic order and its laws to the source of those laws in the natural order, embodied in a domed cosmos. Magnificent, well composed, beautifully articulated, and embedded within the classical tradition, the Capitol represents authority and stands as a capstone to the great city spread below.

Reed's intention is to have us look at the building, and in this he succeeds brilliantly. He opens our eyes to an architectural counterpart to the republic established by the Declaration of Independence and Constitution. This has been Reed's consistent, clear message for half a century: our great public buildings must be worthy of our polity.

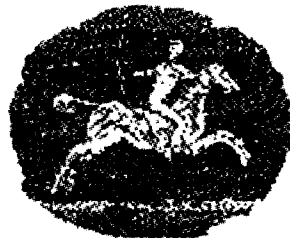
Carroll William Westfall is professor of architectural history at the University of Notre Dame, with a special interest in how architecture and urbanism serve the regime, and the author most recently (with Robert Jan van Pelt) of Architectural Principles in the Age of Historicism (Yale University Press).



PARTHIAN SHOT

THE DEMOCRATIC PEACE

by Mark Helprin



THE PRESIDENT BELIEVES AND OFTEN STATES, AS IF IT WERE A self-evident truth, that, "Democracies are peaceful countries." This claim, sometimes advanced as well in regard to Christianity, Socialism, Islam, and Ethical Culture, is the postulate upon which the foreign policy of the United States now rests. Balance of power, deterrence, and punitive action have been abandoned in favor of a scheme to recast the political cultures of broad regions, something that would be difficult enough even with a flawless rationale, for the power of even the most powerful country in the world is not adequate to transform the world at will.

Nor is the rationale flawless. It is possible to discover various correlations among democracy, war, and peace, depending upon how they are defined and in what time frames. The chief pitfall in such social science exercises is in weighing something like, for example, the Mughal Campaign in Transoxiana, 1646-47, with something like, for example, World War Two. Generally, a straightforward historical approach is better. And what does it show?

Even without reference to the case of a democracy that, finding self-defense insufficient justification and retaliation an insufficient end, makes war on a non-democracy so as to make the non-democracy a democracy that will not make war on the democracy that made war on it, the postulate upon which the president has in all good faith chosen to rely is contradicted by inconvenient fact.

Germany, the primary instigator of the First World War, was a democracy. Although party governance weakened immediately prior to the war, it did so according to the popular will, and upon the outbreak of hostilities power flowed back to the Reichstag as a result of its increased belligerency in reaction to the threat of, perhaps ironically, non-democratic Russia. Democratic Italy joined the entente because it had been spoiling for a fight to wrest the Südtirol from Austria. Extending its northern defenses to the natural Alpine barrier was obviously in Italy's interest, and popular sovereignty acted not as a break on war for this purpose, but as a stimulus.

Less a democracy but a democracy nevertheless, Japan saw its parliamentary government wax and wane in the decades before the Second World War, losing eventually to the militarists but resurging as late as 1937 almost to regain control, with the Meiji constitution unrepudiated and in force throughout the war.

What is one to make of the many 19th-century colonial conquests on the part of democratic European powers? What is one to make of the Mexican and Spanish-American wars, in which, upon the flimsiest pretexts, the United States, the leading democracy in the world, moved to war? And, four score and four years after the American Founding, the most destructive war in America's history arose entirely from within, in belated and necessary fulfillment of the Constitution and the Declaration, documents unexcelled as the guide stars of democracy itself.

Immediate counters to these examples might be that Prussian democracy is an oxymoron; Italian democracy was more feeble then than it is even now; the Japanese had made only a shadow play of Western constitutionalism; colonial conquests don't count because they had begun before the European democracies matured and were continued out of habit (oops, there goes the Congo; we did it again); and as for the United States, well, the Mexican War had something to do with Texas, the Spanish-American with "remember the *Maine*," and at the time of the Civil War not a single woman was able to vote, and a large portion of the population was enslaved.

But such attempts at explaining the complexity of a democracy's relation to war—young democracies are ferocious, old ones serene; the extent and/or speed of economic development predisposes a democracy one way or another in regard to war and peace; as do limitation or extensions of the franchise; etc., etc.—tend to founder because the sample is simultaneously too varied and too small to produce valid rules.

And that is just the point. It isn't that democracies are too old or too young or too fat or too thin, but that none is perfect, and that therefore all are subject to forces that may override the theoretical peacefulness of representative governments. Even perfect democracies, which have never been and will never be, cannot offer the kind of Pax Democratica that America now seeks to construct among a group of states that are famous for their immunity to liberal governance.

OTHER THAN ISRAEL, THE MAJOR COUNTRIES OF THE REGION that are the most democratic are Turkey, Pakistan, Lebanon, and Kuwait. If democracy in Turkey and Pakistan could be drawn as a horse, it would have to have a soldier in the saddle. In Lebanon, it would have a Syrian in the saddle. And the more both Turkey and Pakistan approach the genuine democracy to which American policy would direct them, the more Islamist they will become and the more they will want to do exactly the opposite of what we desire. The more Kuwait democratizes, too, the more Islamist it becomes: in the 2003 elections only 20% of contested seats went to neither traditionalists nor Islamists, and of late the nascently democratic governments of Iraq and Kuwait have had to erect a fence along their border to prevent Kuwaiti youth from crossing to join the Iraqi insurgency.

Not only does American policy expend a great deal of effort to usher politically impure states into a form of popular sovereignty that will not stop them from acting inimically to our interests, but in distancing itself from authoritarian states that are willing to work with us it forgoes potentially critical advantages. For the pleasure of displaying our virtue, we may someday suffer innumerable casualties in a terrorist attack that a compromised state might have helped us to prevent.

In foreign policy, carelessness and confusion often lead to tragedy. Thus, a maxim chosen to guide the course of a nation should be weighed in light of history and common sense. Or is that too much to ask?



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In this Issue

In 2005, terror in Iraq was the manifestation of an ongoing struggle between the country's major groups, but President Bush imagined that the U.S. could involve itself in that struggle without choosing sides—even though parts of his administration were already doing so. Iraq's majority Shi'ite and Kurdish communities were poised to act decisively against the Sunni minority's Ba'ath party, but the United States restrained them. It refused to acknowledge that the majority's pursuit of its own interest provided the path to the only positive outcome of the war that had ever been possible for America. This outcome would also be a source of pressure against the remaining terrorist regimes. But the U.S. government's dealings with these regimes, like its operations in Iraq, followed the logic of a so-called "peace process" rather than the logic of war.

Angelo M. Codevilla
"The Logic of the 'Peace Process'"

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